

Hamline Midway Coalition

*Interviews with community members about using
non-auto forms of transportation*

May 2009



Prepared by:

Alexandra R. Pierce, PhD, Community Faculty
Masters in Community Psychology students
Spring 2009 Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis (PSY615)
Metropolitan State University

Contents

Summary	1
Major findings	2
Background	4
Methods	7
Data analysis	8
Findings	10
Types of transportation recently or currently used	10
Motivations for reducing dependency on a personal car	12
Strategies people use to reduce the use of a personal auto	21
Factors that prevent greater use of non-auto methods	22
Advice for others wanting to reduce their use of a car	30
What HMC can do	33
Promote benefits for people using non-auto forms of transportation	33
Work with policymakers and decision-making bodies	33
Advocate for systems change and improved urban planning	34
Work with existing systems to promote improved service	35
Continue or expand grassroots organizing	35
Volunteered comments regarding light rail	36
Viewed light rail as a positive improvement	36
Less certain about the benefits	37
Appendix	38

Summary

The Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC) — District Council 11 — is a community-based non-profit organization dedicated to making the Hamline Midway neighborhood a better place to live, learn, work, and play. The Hamline Midway Coalition is one of 17 District Councils in the City of Saint Paul. HMC serves the area bounded by University Avenue on the South, Pierce Butler Route on the North, Lexington Avenue on the East, and Transfer Road on the West. HMC has a Transportation Committee that addresses transportation issues in the Hamline Midway neighborhood. The committee disseminates information to and gathers feedback from the community on transportation issues; tracks, discusses, and debates transportation-related issues; and provides information and recommendations for action to the HMC Board of Directors.

During Spring semester 2009, Dr. Alexandra Pierce and her Masters in Community Psychology students from Metropolitan State University conducted a qualitative research project for the Hamline Midway Coalition. The nine students in Dr. Pierce's Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis course scheduled and completed 18 interviews with residents of the Hamline Midway neighborhood. Each student transcribed their own interviews and students worked together to code and analyze the interviews. Each student was responsible for writing up the analysis for specific sections of this report.

The interviews were intended to gather information from Hamline Midway residents who had reduced their use of a personal auto and increased their use of other transportation methods. The main topics of the interviews were:

- What motivated residents to make this change
- Challenges that make it difficult to eliminate the use of a personal auto
- Strategies they have used to overcome those challenges
- Benefits they have realized from reducing their use of a personal car
- Their recommendations for others wanting to increase their use of transportation methods other than a personal auto
- Their suggestions for how Hamline Midway Coalition might encourage increased neighborhood residents' use of non-auto transportation.

Over half of the 20 business owners interviewed for this project made unsolicited comments that they had a high regard for Eastside NDC, and that they much appreciated the current team at ESND, particularly Anne Briseno, the Director of Commercial Development.

Major findings

Half of the business owners described their businesses as “a family business,” and several were multi-generational. A few were fairly new businesses, all owned by Latino immigrants. Interview participants discussed changes that have affected local businesses and provided suggestions on what would help to stabilize local businesses and the communities in which they are located. Some of the major findings of the study are:

- None of the 20 owners and managers interviewed for this project felt they had been impacted by the number of home foreclosures in the area, though half reported a significant slowdown in business activity.
- The owners of older, very stable businesses are not invested in drawing customers from the neighborhood, having extended the reach of their advertising and sales to a much larger audience via the Internet and telephone sales
- Some owners of newer immigrant-owned businesses, though aware of the foreclosures, reported that their business is more strongly affected by other factors.
- Thirteen of the 20 business owners described a downturn in the national economy as having a strong impact on the vitality of Payne Avenue businesses.
- Five of the 20 reported that changes in the racial, ethnic, and economic demographics of neighborhood residents were having a negative impact on their businesses.
- Nine of the longer-term business owners attributed neighborhood changes to the exit of manufacturing jobs and the resulting economic decline and exit of white, single-earner family homeowners, whose homes then became rental properties.
- Eleven of the business owners interviewed for the project asserted that older businesses leaving and/or lack of success by newer ones results in many empty buildings, which impacts their own businesses’ vitality.
- The two major concerns of most business owners are large numbers of low-income minorities and immigrants moving into the neighborhood and a perceived increase in anti-social behaviors by unsavory characters ranging from graffiti and littering to violent crime, which several interview participants framed as related issues.
- Controlling crime is the primary recommendation for improving the vitality of the Payne Avenue business district, though the crimes most frequently mentioned were graffiti and loitering.
- The second most common recommendation made by business owners and managers is to increase home ownership and crack down on absentee landlords who neglect properties and fail to attract responsible tenants.

- Some business owners felt that bringing in competing businesses would attract customers, while others argued that the city, ESND, or some other authority needed to prevent multiple immigrant businesses selling the same product or service.
- Many business owners and managers called for a partnership between businesses, government, and residents to reduce crime, increase home ownership, and stabilize neighborhood businesses.
- The owners of older businesses emphasized their frustration with the city of St. Paul's lack of action toward helping local businesses, though some seemed most disturbed by the city's insistence that they bring their buildings up to code prior to selling or leasing them.
- The newer Latino business owners were more hopeful and more invested in cultivating customers from the neighborhood.
- Regarding suggestions for ESND, the major theme was that business owners needed ESND to provide information and attract governmental sources of assistance and independent investors who could provide support to business owners and families wishing to buy homes in the Eastside.
- For additional information about the research, please contact Michael Jon Olson at the Hamline Midway Coalition, (651-646-1986), or Dr. Pierce (651-247-9587).

Background

The Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC) — District Council 11 — is a community-based non-profit organization dedicated to making the Hamline Midway neighborhood a better place to live, learn, work, and play. The Hamline Midway Coalition is one of 17 District Councils in the City of Saint Paul. HMC serves the area bounded by University Avenue on the South, Pierce Butler Route on the North, Lexington Avenue on the East, and Transfer Road on the West. A map showing walking and bike routes in the neighborhood and an informational brochure are included on the next two pages.

HMC has been instrumental in promoting a walkable and bike-friendly Hamline Midway neighborhood, and has an active Transportation Committee that addresses transportation issues in the neighborhood. The committee disseminates information to and gathers feedback from the community on transportation issues; tracks, discusses, and debates transportation-related issues; and provides information and recommendations for action to the HMC Board of Directors.

In October 2008, Alexandra Pierce, Community Faculty at Metropolitan State University, contacted Michael Jon Olson, Executive Director of the Hamline Midway Coalition, to discuss the possibility of having Masters in Community Psychology Program students conduct a qualitative research project for HMC. Executive Director Olson and Dr. Pierce agreed that for the project, Dr. Pierce's Spring 2009 Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis students would interview up to 20 neighborhood residents, type up word-for-word transcripts of those interviews, code the data for qualitative analysis, and write up the findings in a report to HMC. Dr. Pierce worked with her students to design and implement the research project and to produce this report.

Masters in Community Psychology students participating in the project:

Kellie Cecil-Medina
Deborah Dixon
Madina Dula
Pamela Dupree
Maisha Giles

Amy Parker
Elizabeth Roseborough
Lindsay Scheeler
Mohammad Zafar

Methods

The Hamline Midway Coalition sent an e-mail invitation to its listserve of neighborhood residents, asking that any Hamline Midway resident age 18 or older who had reduced their use of a personal auto and increased their use of other forms of transportation volunteer to be interviewed about their experiences. The invitation asked those interested in volunteering to be interviewed to contact the Hamline Midway Coalition. When volunteers called, HMC staff confirmed that the caller was volunteering to be interviewed by a student then asked the caller to provide an address to which a confirmation letter could be mailed, and telephone number that a student could use to schedule their interview. Volunteers were assured that their addresses and telephone numbers would not be used by the Hamline Midway Coalition for any other purpose, and at the end of the recruitment period, HMC shredded that information.

The recruitment materials and protocol were all reviewed and approved by the Metropolitan State Human Subjects Review Board, prior to the start of recruitment. Copies of those materials are included in the Appendix of this report.

Dr. Pierce developed an interview questionnaire and provided intensive interviewer training to students, emphasizing the key components of informed consent and the requirement that volunteers' confidentiality must be preserved through the use of ID numbers rather than names on all records students maintained as they attempted to schedule interviews. Each student contacted at least two volunteers by telephone to schedule and complete two key informant interviews within the time frame described in the letters to volunteers. Students used the telephone scripts included in the Appendix. Each interview participant was advised of their right to refuse to schedule an interview during the recruitment phone call.

At the time of the interview, interview participants were again advised of their right to refuse to be interviewed or to terminate the interview without consequence at any time. They were also assured that Hamline Midway Coalition would be given no information about who participated, who chose not to, or what any one person said. Students read the consent form aloud to all participants prior to asking them to sign two copies. One copy of the signed consent form, which included contact information for Dr. Pierce, the Hamline Midway Coalition, and the Human Subjects Research Board at Metropolitan State University, was given to the participant and the other was turned in to Dr. Pierce to verify that consent had been given. Once the participant had signed the consent forms, the student began the interview.

The interviews were intended to gather information from Hamline Midway residents about their reduced use of a personal auto and their increased use of other transportation methods. The questionnaire used by students included both main questions and probe questions. That instrument is included in the Appendix of this report.

The main topics of the interviews were:

- What motivated interview participants to reduce their dependency on a personal auto
- Challenges encountered, particularly those that make it difficult to completely eliminate the use of a personal auto
- Strategies that participants have used to overcome those challenges
- Benefits that participants have realized from reducing their use of a personal car
- Participants' recommendations for others wanting to increase their use of transportation methods and reduce their dependence on a personal auto
- Participants' suggestions for how the Hamline Midway Coalition might encourage increased use of non-auto transportation by neighborhood residents

All interviews were tape-recorded or digitally recorded. The student conducting the interview transcribed the conversation word-for-word but did not include the name of the person interviewed or the name of their business on the transcript. After turning in an electronic copy and a hard copy of each transcript to Dr. Pierce for grading, students erased their recordings of the conversations.

Data analysis

In a three-stage coding and analysis process, students first identified major themes in their own two transcripts (stage 1), then worked together with Dr. Pierce as a class, to create an initial set of thematic codes (concepts) and sub-codes (categories of responses within concepts) that would capture all of the responses of all interview participants (stage 2). Numerical values were assigned to each code (category of responses). Students then set up tables in which they applied the stage 2 codes to quotes from their own transcripts. Each student then created smaller individual tables containing all quotes from their own transcripts for a specific code category. Each student was assigned specific code categories that they analyzed for similarities and differences in responses, which they then reported as findings in a section of this report. Students e-mailed the individual tables of quotes for a specific code to the person responsible for writing up that particular section of the report. Part of the analysis was to consider the impact of age and gender on transportation needs, choices, and barriers, so students were asked to include those comparisons in the report sections that they wrote.

When the students completed writing up their assigned sections of the report, they sent electronic versions to Dr. Pierce via e-mail, who reviewed their analysis and conclusions and provided feedback and suggestions for revisions. Once students had made the suggested corrections in their report sections, and Dr. Pierce compiled all sections into a draft report so that students could review all of the findings and make collaborative decisions about further clarification of findings and other necessary revisions. Students responsible for those report sections made final

revisions and sent those portions of the report to Dr. Pierce, who produced a second draft that was reviewed during class by everyone that had contributed. Based on the class's feedback on the second draft, Dr. Pierce made all additional revisions and finalized the report.

Findings

Students completed 18 interviews with Hamline Midway residents, two interviews each. One student's recorder malfunctioned during one interview, so she was able to transcribe only one of her two interviews. Therefore, information from only 17 interviews is reported here. To preserve confidentiality, people who are quoted in the report are not described by their actual age, but as within one of four age groups: under 30, 30 to 39, 40 to 50, and 51 or over.

1. Participant characteristics*

	Women (n=10)		Men (n=7)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 30	1	10%	1	14%
Age 30-39	5	50%	3	43%
Age 40-40	1	10%	2	29%
Age 51+	3	30%	1	14%

Nine of the participants (53%) grew up outside Minnesota, three (17%) came from areas in Minnesota outside the Twin Cities, and five (29%) were from the Twin Cities Metro area, though they may have lived elsewhere at different times in their lives.

Types of transportation recently or currently used

All 17 participants reported that they currently use at least one form of transportation other than personal auto, at least some of the time. Of these, fourteen men and women between the ages of 18 and 51 reported using a personal auto or Hour-Car (a vehicle rented by the hour) combined with other transportation methods. [INCLUDE ID 11 (MADIN, MAY HAVE BEEN MISCODED AS 19), ID 9, WOMAN 30-39, AND ID 13, WOMAN 51+] The remaining three [INCLUDE ID 5, WOMAN 51+ used either ride-share arrangements plus non-auto forms of transportation, or relied completely on forms of transportation other than a personal car.

Personal auto or rental vehicle combined with other methods

Fourteen participants (six men and eight women) [INCLUDE ID9, WOMAN 30-39] said they still use a personal auto, but also use a combination of other transportation methods such as walking, biking and public transportation. Several had mindfully downsized from two cars to one. These are some of the ways this group of participants described the transportation methods that they use:

I frequently have to carry building supplies and materials and so forth, so I just can't do it by public transportation or bicycle so I have to have a vehicle for that. [Otherwise] a couple of my rental properties are very close to where I live so if I have to go and shovel a walk or something, I'd just grab a shovel and walk over, shovel and walk back home. I have a couple of old beater bikes that I take around to the properties and so forth and I can just throw the tool kit in one of the baskets on the front or the back.

I use to work in the suburbs and now I'm working in downtown Minneapolis. My thirteen-year-old son asked me mom why do we need a new second car? That was a good question and again with the bus being well developed, close to where we live, it really did make a lot of sense. So, I decided to try it out to see if we could be a one-car family.

We have one car in our family. I do a lot of walking and biking. My husband takes the bus to work, but I can't take the bus to work because of the timeliness...but in the neighborhood I try to bike.

I still use a car [but] it's a lot easier than I thought it would be not using a car and riding a bike. You know, even going seven miles, it was like "God, it's going to be a long ride." But once I did it, it was like "That's a breeze!" And I found that I adapted well to it and it wasn't as difficult as I thought.

I try to walk a lot if it is not to drastically cold. I use the bus, and on rare occasions if I have really heavy stuff, I wait until I have the car out for some reason, then I do everything. ID 9

Our family does use a personal car some, I am married and have two children and so I share one car with my husband. Mostly we rely on—well, I rely on—the bus for transportation to and from work and then we also do a lot of bike riding and a lot of walking within our neighborhood.

Oh, in our household we do have one automobile. During the summer months I ride my bike whenever I can, and I'm actually close enough to home that I can walk if the weather is decent.

I do drive a van, a minivan. Alternative transportation, we walk, use the bus, or bike.

Ride-share combined with other methods

One of the men in the 31-50 [NO SUCH GROUP] age group said he ride-shares in addition to using other methods of transportation. This is how he described his various transportation methods:

I have a car, but because of where we live [in Hamline Midway], we frequently walk to such places as to the grocery store, Blockbusters to get a movie or to the shopping center. I also, ride-share two to three days a week, but I always take the bus or even a cab if I have to.

Combined non-auto forms of transportation

Two women [AGE GROUPS? INCLUDE ID5, WOMAN 51+] and one man [IDENTIFY HIM AND REPORT HIS AGE GROUP] reported using a combination of non-auto forms of transportation both told interviewers that they do not drive, so they ride with someone when a car is necessary. These are some of their descriptions of how they get around:

I have switched, I do not use an automobile, and I have friends and relatives who go to Cub Foods with me and they go to places that would be more difficult to get to on public transportation. I could walk and I could bike.

ID11, MAY HAVE BEEN MISCODED AS ID19—MADIN'S

I get rides in my husband's car sometimes, but I don't drive at all. I bike or bus.

Up until about 2002 I had only used bicycling and walking and borrowed friends cars, then I bought a car because I started working quite a bit away and it was getting difficult to use the bus. Starting in spring 2007. I started biking to work. That was a seven-mile commute, up along midtown Greenway and Marshall Avenue, and then when I started working here, it's just two miles from my house. So, I just started biking regularly or walking. IDENTIFY THIS MAN—IS HE MAISHA'S ID 19?

Motivations for reducing dependency on a personal car

The people interviewed for this project gave a wide variety of reasons for using a car less and using other ways to get around more frequently. Some are motivated by positive experiences using non-auto forms of transportation, some described reasons related to civic responsibility, and some described economic incentives. Others emphasized quality-of-life reasons or the characteristics of the neighborhood itself as the factors that motivate them.

Used other methods when younger and have just continued

Two men (both under 30) and three women (all in the 30-39 age group) [INCLUDE ID 9, WOMAN 30-39] said that one of the reasons they use transportation methods other than a personal car is that they had used those methods when they were younger or when they lived in another area. They had enjoyed the experience and/or the benefits, so were encouraged to either continue using those methods or begin using them again as adults. These are some of their comments:

I used to take the bus as a teenager, as a college student. And, I don't know, I enjoyed it. The people you see, some of the conversations...I guess it keeps you connected. More in touch with other people, you know, circumstances and situations...It keeps me humble, anyway.

There is nothing unfamiliar about taking the bus for me, so it's not like there is any great sacrifice. When I was a little girl, I used to take the bus all of the time. ID 9

I grew up using public transportation, riding bikes. I remember growing up as a kid and asking my parents for a ride and them telling me, “You better take the bus”...as I got older I started thinking about more reasons to continue.

Experiences with good public transportation systems elsewhere

Two men (one under 30, one in the 30-39 age group, and one in the 51 and over age group) told interviewers they had lived in other cities that had excellent public transportation systems prior to moving to Hamline Midway, and had become accustomed to not using a car. These are some of the ways they described those experiences:

My wife and I lived in the [Washington] DC area for two years, and their public transportation system is much better [than here]. They have the Metro system and buses that link up to the Metro. We have the light rail here, but it pales in comparison to the Metro system in DC.

We moved from Buffalo [New York] to Boulder [Colorado], which was in 2001. We sold our second car because we did not want to move two cross-country, and at that point we never had a second car [again]...I was working close enough to home, where I either walked, biked. I didn't take the bus. Then we moved and it was on a bus route so I bused, my wife drove.

I used to bicycle commute to work when I lived in Ann Arbor [25 years earlier]. It's always been my goal; to reduce transportation via personal vehicle just because it's so expensive and I'm cheap.

Environmental concerns

Eleven of the 17 people interviewed for this project (one woman and one man under the age of 30, two women and four men ages 30 to 39, one man and one woman ages 40 to 50, and one woman over 51) [BE SURE YOU INCLUDE ID 9, WOMAN 30-39] said that environmental concerns have encouraged them to reduce their use of a personal auto. This are some examples of what they had to say:

It is my civic duty. I am concerned for the environment. I know the environment is in jeopardy and I try to determine, in my own way, how I can make a difference. ID 9

I would say I was making a statement, like a “save the earth” kind of statement. We raise our kids to care for the earth and pick up trash, and we discuss driving and how it is best used. I love having our car, it would be very difficult to have no car at all...but on the other hand I feel sort of guilty, about the pollution and using oil...Now it's kind of like a badge of honor or something, to say we have only one car, and we don't want to get another one, really... Just taking one more vehicle off the road [is] sort of a benefit to society... There is just a good feeling, just feeling like we're contributing to less pollution, less congestion.

It has a lot to do with carbon footprint issues and things like that...you know, what kind of trash you leave behind you, on your environment...There's a big movement, I think, towards [the] environmental, like preservation. Being more mindful of the things we do in our everyday lives...I figured, you know, this is a good way to cut down on some of the emissions and things like that.

I didn't really want to be driving in the first place, environmentally. Cars are expensive and not all that necessary. Using other forms of transportation feels good on your environmental conscious.

Conserving energy

Three of the interview participants [HOW MANY WOMEN, MEN, WHAT AGE GROUPS?] said that concerns about conserving energy, especially reducing dependency on oil, are the reason they try to drive less and use other modes of transportation instead. Here are a few of their comments:

The whole thing on getting oil is really troubling for me, and cars. It seems we're exploiting a lot of countries for their oil. Supporting those mines, wars to keep our oil cheap. It's just troubling to me and environmentally, it can be disastrous.

I feel like I've reduced my impact on the earth...I don't to be driving, polluting, [for only] two miles. [It] is really a waste of fuel.

It certainly is an intentional decision about conserving energy or being more efficient in how we use it.

Economic reasons

[INCLUDE ID 13, WOMAN 51+]

Ten of the 17 people interviewed (five men and five women) said that they used a personal car less frequently as a way to reduce expenses. Four of the men (one under 30, two in the 30-39 age group, and one in the 40 to 50 age group) and four of the women (one under 30, two in the 30-39 age group, and one in the 51 and over age group) said that the price of gas and the price of auto insurance had motivated their family to go from two cars to only one. One man in the 40-50 age group reported that when one of his family's two cars became undriveable, they simply decided not to buy another car since they seldom used it. These are some of the ways the participants talked about their economic motivations to depend less on

[It] didn't make sense to drive two cars downtown and pay for parking. The second car just sat out front and we were paying insurance on it and doing oil changes and it just sat there not being used.

Both our cars were paid for and so really the insurance, what we were paying in insurance was kind of ridiculous.

We ended up deciding it really was not worth having two cars and gave a car to my sister to use...Financially, the major benefits have been saving from not having a car payment, car insurance, and car repairs. ID13

We just realized that it was not worth paying insurance every month just to use a vehicle so infrequently, so it was also a money saving thing, and right now the Jeep is just sitting in our garage, uninsured with a dead battery.

It was a deliberate choice. Partly, the cost of owning the second car was significant, just with insurance and gasoline. It's a liability [when] you've got to park it somewhere and it can get damaged in the process, and the other motivation is that we live very close to a bus route so it's incredibly convenient.

We ended up deciding it really was not worth having two cars and gave a car to my sister to use. It was when we worked in downtown St. Paul and had to pay for parking. We had to pay or car insurance, repairs and everything else.

One man said that he had considered getting a moped to reduce gas and insurance costs, but realized he would still have to pay for parking:

Then I found out that I would still have to pay for parking downtown, even if I drove a moped. That prevented me from going that route.

Four participants (one man under the age of 30, and one man and one woman in the 30-39 age group) [INCLUDE ID 9, WOMAN 30-39] said they like transportation methods other than a personal auto because they don't have to pay for parking. These are some examples of their comments:

Oh year, parking would be something that would encourage me to take the bus. [Right now], if I miss the bus going to work, I go into my garage, get the car, call and say I'll be ten minutes late because of parking. ID 9

It was when I worked in downtown St. Paul and had to pay for parking. That was an expense we didn't have to have. We had to pay for car insurance, repairs and everything else.

Support from employers

Two participants (both men in the 30-39 age group) said that either their own or their wife's employer's practice of subsidizing bus passes is a major motivation for not using a personal auto as often as they once had. This is what they had to say:

[My wife's] employer subsidizes her bus pass, and the difficulty of parking downtown, [it's better] just in terms of convenience.

I registered through an employer program. Wells Fargo is my employer. They have a commuter benefit. It takes pre-tax dollars and puts it towards the purchase of a metro pass. It's about \$80 a month, pre-tax dollars.

Another man, in the 51 and over age group, said that his employer supports ride-sharing:

I work at 3M...3M will provide autos for van pools.

One of the men in the under-30 age group described another type of employer support that allows his wife to take the bus most days:

Because she takes [the bus] at high frequency days [when buses run often]...if she does end up missing it's a wait of 15 minutes and her schedule is flexible enough that it hasn't been a problem for her. The only situation where it does become a problem is when her work brings her not to a downtown location where her office is ...fortunately her work has a vehicle that they provide for that sort of thing so she still buses in.

Alternative transportation is a priority

Two of the women (one in the 30-39 age group and one in the 51 and over age group) said that their families had made a mindful decision to use alternative transportation methods. This is how they described that decision:

We wanted to move to a neighborhood with a house where we would have enough room to have kids. We really only looked at neighborhoods where we knew we would have a variety of transportation options...When our kids were first in daycare they just went five houses down the street. Now they're a little bit older so they're in a preschool that is on the bus line...so we really focused on looking at the schools that were on the bus line...I do really like to take my kids on the bus and they do like to get on the bus. And so, we'll go downtown Minneapolis to the Library, or...to a Twin's game...I take them downtown St. Paul to the Children's Museum.

Part of the reason I picked [this neighborhood] was I wanted my son to have the opportunity to be able to walk to the public library. That is something I did not have as a kid and the library was five miles away, and that was awful. And to me that was key.

Living a healthier lifestyle

Six of the interview participants (one woman and one man in the under 30 age group, one woman and one man in the 30-39 age group, one man one in the 40-50 age group, and one woman in the 51and over age group) said they were motivated to use transportation methods other than a personal car as a way to reduce stress and be more in touch with people in the world around them. These are a few of their comments:

I like being able to be out and about and being able to interact in a way that you can't in a vehicle... you see different things. You interact with your environment differently...there's things you miss in a car that you see when you're walking around, like little kids might have their hop scotch or other art work, chalk drawing and so forth. You won't see that if you're driving you [but] you would see it if you're walking.

I guess it is probably a result there is less stress; we don't have another vehicle to maintain; we don't have to worry about parking. For instance the snow storm that we just had in the snow emergency I wasn't aware of it and I learned about it because my neighbor's car was being towed."

I hate having to wait behind cars and even though it was always almost less time to drive, it was more stressful, and so I preferred the longer 45 minutes bike and time to myself. Time to think, time to just be alone...Overall, how do you want to live your life? Do you want to live a life you actually enjoy or do you want to be sitting there mad at yourself because you're stuck in traffic again?

I think it's [WHAT?] been helpful in terms of stress reduction, and just a looking at my friends, and as you hit your 40's your metabolism really changes, and you suddenly go "Hmmm." You have to override that middle age bulge and I think it [WHAT?] helps me maintain my weight on a healthy level. And you have different experiences, culturally and socially...when you're walking or taking a bus or riding your bike. Private cars are isolated and you don't have the same kind of interaction with people when you're walking, so you have a different interaction with people

We found this early childhood education class that's at a school, that's two and a half three blocks away, because you know, we could walk there. And so we're, I think, [building] more community connections and, really doing things that benefit our micro-community more.

When you're on the bus you talk to people. Some people don't want that, they don't want to talk to some guy on the bus or they don't want people on the street talk to them but I like that because you get a different perspective on the world umm so I think that is another advantage.

I also found that there were additional families bonding because there were those opportunities [WHAT IS SHE TALKING ABOUT? WHAT OPPORTUNITIES, AND WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION METHODS?]to be together and make it work. [IDENTIFY THE ID: WOMAN UNDER 30, ORIGINALLY CODED AS BUILDING COMMUNITY TOGETHERNESS.]

[MAKE SURE ID 9, WOMAN 30-39 IS INCLUDED IN THESE NUMBERS.] Nine of the people interviewed commented that not using a car had increased their physical activity. These respondents included five women (two in the 30-39 age group; one in the 40-50 age group, and two in the 51 and over age group). The four men included three under the age of thirty and one in the 40-50 age group. In general, these participants reported that they get more exercise from biking and walking, and the activity made them feel better. Three of the women (two over 51 and one under thirty) mentioned that they felt they were living a healthier lifestyle overall, and two of

the under-30 men described bike-riding as a form of relaxation. These are some of the comments from participants who emphasized the health benefits:

Not driving is probably the number one healthiest decision I have made in my life.

I like to bike a lot in general. For recreation and I have been doing it for years

Well, there are a lot of reasons why I do it. But of course, I don't go completely without. Clearly, there are times I need [a car]. I like being able to get the exercise.

When you start walking, you start exercising, which feels good.

I feel healthier; I feel like I'm treating myself better.

When I take the bus to my daughter's house it is actually about six or seven blocks to walk, so I get a lot of exercise. I find myself actually walking more when I take the bus.
ID 9

The neighborhood itself

[MAKE SURE ID 9, WOMAN 30-39 AND ID 13, MAN 51+ ARE INCLUDED IN THESE COUNTS]. Ten of the 17 participants said that the neighborhood itself encourages them to use transportation methods other than a personal car. All ten mentioned that they shop locally and that they walk or bike to get a hair cut, a cup of coffee, to the drug store or use the library. The mix included five men (three in the 30-39 age group and two in the 40-50 age group) and five women (one under thirty, three between 30-39; one in the 40-50 age group, and one in the 51 and over group). Some of these participants emphasized the number of businesses in the neighborhood and "walkability." These are some of their comments:

I think that decision has been easy for us, because where we have chosen to live...if we lived in an area where there wasn't bus service for instance, then it really wouldn't have been an option. So, I think for alternative transportation, like biking, walking, using mass transit, there are benefits to be found in densely settled areas, and so as a consequence when we were looking to buy a house in St. Paul we really didn't consider anything outside of particular areas in St. Paul. [The] valuable lesson [is] that cities already have the infrastructure to support those kinds of decisions. I imagine that may be the case in some suburban areas, but...if those options are there they weren't easily visible. [THIS QUOTE WAS IN "PLAN AHEAD" 5.5 AND I MOVED IT BECAUSE IT FIT BETTER HERE. IDENTIFY THE ID NUMBER AND INCLUDE HIM IN YOUR COUNTS FOR THIS SECTION.

I mean, this is perfect. We've got the library, the pharmacy, you've got hair salons, you've got groceries. You've got everything. It's a great neighborhood...I know the neighborhood. I mean, everybody kind of says hello. I ride my bike or I jog around the neighborhood. I know a lot of people just from seeing them and saying "Hi."

One of the reasons we live where we live is so that we can do that [be close to where we work], and it was a conscious choice."

I am two blocks from anything I need in terms of shopping [so] generally I walk...I am two blocks from a bus that comes every ten minutes on Snelling and University. It is so convenient. ID 9

As far as getting where we need to get, it is really not that hard when you live in a centralized neighborhood like this, where it is easy access to bus lines, grocery stores, and coffee shops. ID 13

I am a stay home mom and I love living in a community that I can walk where everything is in a distance of a couple minutes walk. I love the fact that I can walk to a coffee house and walk to the library and walk to places, in an effort to get to know people and to connect with people.

Living in this neighborhood we pretty much got everything in walking distance you know, you can walk over to Rainbow, get a little bit of groceries, you can walk up and down Snelling Avenue and you will find a hardware store like Menards, so everything is fairly close to – so there isn't a lot of things I have to travel very far for.

There is a lot in that neighborhood, tons of grocery stores, drug stores, restaurants, shops. If we wanted, we probably could do away with the car entirely and just walk and get ninety percent of what we need.

There are restaurants and coffee houses and Target and Blockbuster and grocery stores and that kind of thing all within our neighborhood.

[CHECK THIS—I THINK ID 6 IS 51+ WOMAN. The three women in the 30-39 age group commented that when they were children they could walk and ride in their neighborhoods, and they wanted that same experience for their children and had found it possible in the Hamline-Midway.

When my son was a little guy about five or so he used to walk over to the Hamline library from my house. I would call up and say to the librarian... "He's on his way." She would say okay and when he got there she would call and say "He's arrived!" And he might spend the whole afternoon there, just browsing. And then I'd get a phone call "He's on his way," and when he got back I would call and say "He's back!" And that's the kind of thing you get in a walkable neighborhood that you don't get in a suburb. ID 6

The biggest thing was that when I was growing up was that I used to ride a bike everywhere, and so I tell my kids I want them to be able to do that too.

ANY OTHER GOOD QUOTES FOR THIS SECTION?

Other people said that the neighborhood's proximity to a major transportation hub and easy access to bus service is a motivation to use a car less, or even go without one. Four women (one under thirty; one in the 30-39 age group, and two in the 51 and older age group) remarked that the neighborhood is suitable for using public transportation, because so many buses serve the

intersection of two major streets [Snelling and University]. They felt that they could get any where they wanted to go in a relatively short period of time. These are some of their comments:

We live in a fairly dense settlement area and it's easy to use other modes of transportation at relatively safe levels...when we were committed to it [non-car transportation] we could pursue it [no car] and it wasn't like trying to fit a round peg in a square hole.

I don't even know when the buses come on University that I can take to work, I just go to the bus stop and [I] know one will show up.

My wife and I live right next to the intersection of Snelling and University, so we have multiple bus lines. So, we can go almost anywhere we want to go, on the bus."

When I moved to the neighborhood I realized that I was able to function without a car, and that I could do it and do it well. Because I live in the transportation crossroad [Snelling and University] here in the Midway, I can take buses to either downtown, St. Paul or Minneapolis. I can go from there to the airport if I am going on a trip, and I do that, too. I connect to the railway [light rail] and I use that when I have certain things that I am doing in Minneapolis and in the areas where the railway goes. I feel very confident that I will be able to say "goodbye" to cars and actually be more intentional about the kind of trip services I will use.

Strategies people use to reduce the use of a personal auto

Sixteen of the 17 people interviewed for this project described three main ways that they organize their lives in order to reduce their use of a personal car: splitting up responsibilities with other family members and efficient planning.

Splitting responsibilities

One woman and two men in the 30-39 age group said that their households split responsibilities in such a way that they can share one car and use it as little as they can. These are some of the way they described the arrangements that worked for them:

I live with four other adults and we're housemates and we shop [for groceries] together. So, we shop once a week [using one car]...we reduce the number of trips, but we shop for a lot of people so we have to get a lot.

[My partner] will take the bus, and come home at six o'clock at night, so I'll have to pick up the kids from daycare [with the car], but, we've so far really been able to work everything out."

We did decide that if we did sign up for it [an Hour Car] and one of us needed the car, then the one who needed to take the kids would just keep the Hour Car, and then the other person could take the car co-op car.

Planning ahead

Six of the participants (INCLUDE ID 11, ONE WOMAN 30-39 (MADIN'S, MAY HAVE BEEN MISCODED AS 19], ONE WOMAN 30-39, ONE WOMAN 51+]) described the importance of planning ahead so their households could use a personal car less frequently or avoid using one at all. These are some of their comments:

There are some days that I do have an eight o'clock meeting that I know I have to be at, and so I modify my schedule those days.

I think [we do] a lot of planning ahead, so that we would have the time to try to choose to do a few things in a day. We would take the wagon and pull it along to bring the children, or to carry things in the wagon.

For the most part, I am able to find friends and relatives who are going to the same place I am going, and they will give me a ride. I have a cart and I take it on the bus. If I go, for instance, to Cub Foods, I will go on the bus with my cart.

Even though they didn't have showers at my work place, I would take a cloth or a washcloth and just go into the larger bathroom stall and just kind of wipe down or whatever to freshen up before the day and that was not a big deal. [By a bike rider]

Recently, what I've been doing is getting a ride from my wife. My wife and I leave at around the same time...I ride with her to the bus stop. So, that's a way my wife and I have partnered or collaborated.

Taking advantage of good weather

Three of the interview participants [GENDER AND AGE?] said they use transportation methods other than a personal car more frequently when it is warmer and/or easier to negotiate, and less frequently in the winter. These are a few of their comments:

I will use the bike, but not in the winter. When it is nice it is ok, but the winter is a challenge and it so is the cold.

In the summer sometimes we'll bike and use backpacks and side bags or crates on the bicycle. It's kind of an adventure you know.

I walk in decent weather. I can stand the cold, but iciness makes too dangerous a walk.

I tried to do it at least three or four months of the year. Mostly during the summer obviously. Spring, summer, fall. You know, before the snow and everything started.

Factors that prevent greater use of non-auto methods

[REDO NUMBERS TO REFLECT INCLUSION OF ELIZABETH AND MADIN'S QUOTES]
Seven of the 13 participants described family needs and/or personal physical limitations as factors in their ability to limit the use of a personal car.

Family needs

Women in all four age groups mentioned family needs as a factor that limited their ability to use a personal auto less frequently, outnumbering the only man (who was in the under-30 age group) saying that family needs present challenges by a ratio of six to one. The women included one in the 51 and over age group, one in the 40-50 age group, three in the 30-39 age group, and one under the age of 30.

The central theme in describing family needs was children, particularly the time needed and the difficulty of getting them to and from daycare, accommodating their extracurricular activities, and getting them to medical and dental appointments. These are some of the comments about the importance of time in parents' use of a personal auto to meet the needs of their children:

We have two children who have to get to preschool. We also have to get to preschool by a certain time to pick them up. If I get off from work late or my ride-share does not get me home in time...we have to make some sacrifices.

Well it has to do with speed mostly. We had two cars when my daughter was in high school. During college we had one car. When she came home there were a lot of doctor's appointments, so if you're going from one to the other and she has a day she needs to have two or three appointments it's impossible to use alternative transportation just because of the timing of the different venues.

We would go down together and [then] we would get a call from school, that somebody is sick. And so, that means that somebody has to take the car and go to school and take them to the doctor. That leaves one person downtown, and the need to have a bus pass and a plan to get home...so that person can just get on the bus."

I can't take the bus to work, because I have to get my kids ready to go to daycare, so I do not have enough time to use the bus and get to work. When I work, I am over on the West side one day and then another day I am over on the Eastside. I would not be easy. And it just wouldn't work.

[CHECK TO SEE IF MAN WHOSE QUOTE I ADDED IS A DIFFERENT MAN OR DIFFERENT PERSON THAN THE OTHER TWO WHO ARE QUOTED. Others mentioned the intersection of time needed and distance to their destination as an issue when trying to meet not just children's needs, but those of the entire family:

On Saturdays and Sunday's my husband is in town and the kids have their activities and then it kind of gets busy because I also have to go to the gym and so I need to bring the car back in time so he could go play basket ball and then come back so I could go something later on that day.

There are some ongoing challenges. We have four kids. Our boys are involved in sports activities and so they need to be somewhere, and as the little girls get older they are going to be doing stuff. Or, sometimes I have something I need to be doing, which overlaps with them, so we really have to map out.

We also had a big dog, and, I liked to take him places, go for runs and so forth, and without a car it would have been difficult. THIS IS A MALE—SEE IF HE'S THE ONE ALREADY COUNTED OR A SECOND MALE.

Difficulties balancing work, family/personal needs, and transportation

[INSERT THE NUMBER] participants reported that the difficulty of balancing work schedules and/or the distance to work with other needs significant limits their efforts to use other transportation methods, reduce their use of a personal auto, or even a second car. This group included X men (INSERT NUMBER IN EACH AGE GROUP) and X women (INSERT NUMBER IN EACH AGE GROUP). These are a few of the ways they described the challenges they had encountered:

One thing that was an issue with me was my son's school. When he was over on the Eastside, it was so far away and I was an unpaid volunteer librarian, part-time, so that they would have library services every day of the week. Otherwise, they may not have [daily services]. Every Monday was my day I went in. I would frequently spend the entire day, sometimes a half of a day. The only way I could get there that made any sense was I had to drive there.

That worked out pretty well [using alternative transportation], but the problem with that is once you have two children with two jobs and trips to daycare and all of that, we started thinking about a second car...you know, everyone lives far away from their job we need two cars to have two jobs.

X WOMEN (AGE GROUPS) AND X MEN (AGE GROUPS) indicated that job distance or work schedules make it very difficult to use forms of transportation other than a personal car. Here are some of the ways they described the challenges that prevented them from reducing their use of personal autos:

Yeah there are days when; for example, my husband has a medical appointment or someplace he needs to go, when it's just too far to go on the bike to take out of his workday. [WOMAN, NOT SURE OF AGE GROUP—IS SHE THE SAME ONE QUOTED BELOW? IF SO, WE NEED TO COMBINE HER QUOTES. IF NOT, WE NEED TO IDENTIFY HER AGE GROUP AND INCLUDE HER IN THE COUNT.]

On occasion I have to schedule meetings for work that are outside of downtown Minneapolis, I used to have an employer that would cover my bus fare, I mean that would cover my cab fare if I needed to go to a meeting, and I don't think it works out that way quite right now. But, so that kind of causes a problem, like right now my, I just discovered I have a meeting next week and my husband's ride share won't be at work with him all day, so, so he'll have to figure out alternative transportation to work that day.

If during my day I work in a school and I have to go to the lower school during the [same] day, which is a different building [requiring travel], taking the bus doesn't work for me."

I would have to take the car to work that day [when I have to travel for my job]. It doesn't happen that often, probably once or twice a month [that] I have to go to the other campus. So I have to have the car on that day, which is kind of too bad when you really think about it, because [the campuses] are not that far apart.

My job requires me to move to different sites at different times [of the day].

Two of the women with small children said that the number of children in their family increased the difficulty of using any type of transportation other than a personal auto:

I don't mind waiting for the bus or riding the bus but I have four kids and one little one in a stroller, so it's just physically not possible.

We have three children, and sometimes I think, “Three young children, it seems like a great effort to get to places”...so I think, just even mentally having to prepare myself, that this is going to be harder, it is going to take longer, but we need to do this not only for ourselves but to teach our children something better.

Moving or carrying lots of stuff or big stuff

Three men and three women (two in the 40-50 age group, and four in the 51 and over age group) reported challenges in using forms of alternative transportation whenever it was necessary to transport a lot of something or anything heavy, in addition to other family needs. These are a few of their comments: [SEE IF ANY OF THESE ARE THE SAME PERSON AND CAN BE COMBINED]

If I have an eight-foot ladder, I’m not going to be able to take a bus or walk over to my properties. So then I have to have a vehicle. If I’m going to Menard I have to drive. If they had some kind of shutter but even then it would be hard. I only use the vehicle when I have to.

On rare occasions if I have really heavy stuff, I wait until I have the car out for some reason.

I used the car occasionally; mostly, to haul things.”

Another disadvantage of public transportation is like if I have my computer, my work out clothes in a bag, my school stuff in here, I’ve got 3 big bags.”

Well I mean, [alternative transportation methods are] not inaccessible, but certainly inconvenient for doing errands like buying groceries. We’re committed to a certain grocery store, we’re members of a co-op and that’s where we go there. Bus wise, we can get there, but it’s really not convenient. It involves a transfer and if one of us is going on a weekend, it’s probably going to be round trip, an hour and a half to two hours. It’s just it’s not something we want, we have other things to do. I guess right now, priority is to get it done quick...we haven’t also had the equipment to just go to the grocery stores with bicycles and carry it back. Although, that has changed, so check with me in six months to see if it makes a difference.”

Unplugged holes in the transportation system

When participants were asked about holes they see in the public transportation system, they gave a variety of answers, most of which were regarding Metro Transit bus service. Six participants (two women 51 or over, one man under 30, one woman and one man in the 30-39 age group, and one woman in the 40-50 age group) said that bus scheduling and/or routes are not adequate or convenient enough, or that information about them is too difficult to access. These are a few of their comments:

Yeah, it was hard to [use non auto transportation to work], the bus there was just too many transfers and it took, like, 45 minutes to an hour and a half to [get to] work.

Snelling and University routes are really good but when you get out beyond that it's ya know if a bus only comes every half hour or ever hour like Grand Ave impossible because the bus comes once an hour.

You know what, actually, I think is a little challenging, is using the Metro Transit website to create a personal schedule, and even see bus schedules... you have to know what intersection you're going to be at, and stuff like that... that's kind of a pain in the neck.

And too in the winter time as I said, they take the bus, but the buses will be late sometimes an hour. My husband has been late or the bus never makes it to the stop. It is hard to depend on it.

I'd say one problem with mass transit is that it is harder to use at night, it's really geared toward commuting. If you just want to do something for fun at night, it's a lot more of a pain to take public transportation—just that buses run much more infrequently.

I think it is necessary to have frequent stops, so that more people will use it, and to make it convenient for people. If you don't make it convenient for people, they are always going to use the car.

For Metro Transit, they could increase the frequency and adhere to the schedules posted. I have called Metro Transit in a number of incidences, in particular the 84 bus that runs down Snelling Avenue. [CALLED THEM ABOUT WHAT?]

Absence of bike-friendly urban planning

Of the 17 people interviewed for this project, five women (INSERT NUMBER PER AGE GROUP) and three men [INSERT NUMBER PER AGE GROUP] commented on the lack of accommodations for bicycles as an alternative form of transportation. Some said that bicycle trails are inadequately constructed for frequent use, while others commented on roads being poorly maintained to the degree that they made biking unsafe. These are some of their comments:

I would say that bicycling is only difficult because there are some stretches of the city where there just aren't any good routes and you're forced to ride your bicycle on busy streets... Obviously, dedicated bike lanes or completely dedicated bike trails would be wonderful.

Well, I mean, as a bicyclist who would like to bicycle year round, child care circumstances notwithstanding [WAS THIS PART OF THE QUOTE?], [but] we have awful North-South bike routes. We actually don't have a continuous one through the city, so it's actually pretty problematic. There are actually posted North-South routes, but they don't go across the railroad tracks on the North end of St. Paul, and, like, where Energy Park Drive is... [it is] pretty difficult for people who would like to bicycle but don't feel that they have a route that legitimizes or accommodates bicycle traffic.

The default is for cars, and that doesn't accommodate bicycles very well, when you've got potholes or when the most convenient route is on a busy road ... it can be dangerous.

It would be much better if there were dedicated traffic lanes, like the greenway. You can't bike on the sidewalk, you can't have bikes where people are walking, and cars do not know to look for bikes.

The streets need to be smoother. Hamline, for instance is very rough. It's very hard to bike on that street, especially between University and Selby, or on Marshall. I mean some places are just a war zone... There are just these pits [in the road] If you're riding along and you hit something and you don't see it, you just have to be careful. And you don't want to ride on sidewalks because that's just rude to pedestrians.

Participants also commented on the safety of biking when trails are not effectively marked. XX men and XX women said they felt unsafe riding, even on bike trails, because vehicles either do not pay attention to bikes, or even see signs giving bikes the right of way.

While we have bicycle paths marked, I think it's a joke, because again, nobody watches the signs or pays any special attention to bike lanes because they are not marked, there are only signs. They [the bike lanes] really are not marked on the street. So, I think Minneapolis does a much, much better job in terms of making two bike lanes and separating them from traffic. St Paul is doing a really bad job in terms of that.

[There need to be] clearer rules[for vehicles, regarding bikes on the road]. I think a lot could be done with just billboards, telling drivers to notice bicycles; you know, just a campaign informational saying "These are the rules and bicycles are allowed to be on the street."

While there is this place on the side [of the road to ride a bike], it's littered with bolts and glass, and for bikes all that stuff is really dangerous when you're going 18 to 20 miles an hour.

I think that just the lack of awareness. A lot of people are actually disdainful of bikers. People are, you know, "get out of the way." They come really close just to tease you and they don't realize how dangerous that is for bikes, because if you are off balance, you're off balance. As you age, that's really bad.

One of the men interviewed for the project also commented on the tearing down of existing convenient paths and bridges that had been used for alternative transportation as a significant barrier created by poor planning:

They got rid of the pedestrian bridge across Griggs, across the freeway, and that kind of put a crimp in my plans because I did go [that way] to go to work.

One other person described the Midtown Greenway as an example of what works in urban planning for alternative transportation:

I love the Midtown greenway. I use that a lot in the summer time. Like, my son just moved back from New York to Minneapolis, and when we go see him we ride our bikes

Other safety concerns

XX of the 17 participants mentioned some type of safety concern related to walking, biking, and using the bus. Eight of them (three women and five men [INSERT AGE INFO]) said that winter weather is a critical factor in their decision to use an alternative form of transportation instead of a personal vehicle. These are a few of the things they told interviewers about how weather affects their use of transportation methods other than a personal auto:

I mean it's not the rain, but if it's really cold and raining then its [harder]. I kind of like snow storms, but if it's really, really bad, obviously you can't take the bikes then, because nobody can see you.

I think one of the frustrating things is when it snows, buses are not necessarily reliable. I had it happen last winter that I waited for the bus, when the bus finally came and it was during the snowstorm, the bus was full so you had to literally...sit there for a hour in the cold outside when no bus was there, no fun. I think in that case you would have been otherwise been sitting in your car stuck in traffic, but still, it's in your car stuck in traffic.

In the winter, the freeze-thaw cycle really erodes the pavement and while it's inconvenient for a car to go over a pothole, it can be a real danger to go through one on a bicycle.

This year when it was icy, it just kind of put me in a foul mood because I didn't want to drive, but, I just felt as though I was being forced to because the sidewalk was icy and the streets were icy. I pretty much decided to walk and figured out a route. You having a spill on the bike, especially when you're in traffic, can be a little scary. You know, you lose your will a little bit.

Three women (one in the 30-39 age range, one in the 40-50 age range and one in the 51 and over age range) said that icy sidewalks in winter made them hesitant to continue walking during the winter. These are some examples of what they told interviewers:

I actually had one of my jobs a few blocks away and decided to make a commitment to walk. People were not shoveling the sidewalks or driveways and I fell. It was a bad enough fall that I went back to driving the few blocks.

The extreme cold this year curtailed my walking, as well as the iciness. I can stand the cold, but the iciness makes too dangerous a walk.

At that point [winter], ice on the sidewalks...that is the major impediment to walking. People don't shovel their walks and I understand why, we live on a corner and believe me, it's really hard [but] people don't shovel their walks, and if you're just walking with your dog...if you're walking somewhere to get there on time, it's a problem.

One of the men said that his wife's work hours and work location made her decide to use the car for personal safety reasons:

Other safety concerns

XX of the 17 participants mentioned some type of safety concern related to walking, biking, and using the bus. Eight of them (three women and five men [INSERT AGE INFO]) said that winter weather is a critical factor in their decision to use an alternative form of transportation instead of a personal vehicle. These are a few of the things they told interviewers about how weather affects their use of transportation methods other than a personal auto:

I mean it's not the rain, but if it's really cold and raining then its [harder]. I kind of like snow storms, but if it's really, really bad, obviously you can't take the bikes then, because nobody can see you.

I think one of the frustrating things is when it snows, buses are not necessarily reliable. I had it happen last winter that I waited for the bus, when the bus finally came and it was during the snowstorm, the bus was full so you had to literally...sit there for a hour in the cold outside when no bus was there, no fun. I think in that case you would have been otherwise been sitting in your car stuck in traffic, but still, it's in your car stuck in traffic.

In the winter, the freeze-thaw cycle really erodes the pavement and while it's inconvenient for a car to go over a pothole, it can be a real danger to go through one on a bicycle.

This year when it was icy, it just kind of put me in a foul mood because I didn't want to drive, but, I just felt as though I was being forced to because the sidewalk was icy and the streets were icy. I pretty much decided to walk and figured out a route. You having a spill on the bike, especially when you're in traffic, can be a little scary. You know, you lose your will a little bit.

Three women (one in the 30-39 age range, one in the 40-50 age range and one in the 51 and over age range) said that icy sidewalks in winter made them hesitant to continue walking during the winter. These are some examples of what they told interviewers:

I actually had one of my jobs a few blocks away and decided to make a commitment to walk. People were not shoveling the sidewalks or driveways and I fell. It was a bad enough fall that I went back to driving the few blocks.

The extreme cold this year curtailed my walking, as well as the iciness. I can stand the cold, but the iciness makes too dangerous a walk.

At that point [winter], ice on the sidewalks...that is the major impediment to walking. People don't shovel their walks and I understand why, we live on a corner and believe me, it's really hard [but] people don't shovel their walks, and if you're just walking with your dog...if you're walking somewhere to get there on time, it's a problem.

One of the men said that his wife's work hours and work location made her decide to use the car for personal safety reasons:

We got a second car, basically, because my wife got a job working as a mental health counselor in a halfway house, and, just outside of downtown Minneapolis... she was on a shift from four in the afternoon until midnight on weekends. it wouldn't have been very convenient for her to take a bus all the way from the Midway in St. Paul, downtown, and walk from the stop all the way through Loring Park where the halfway house was. And, she especially wasn't comfortable doing that at night on the weekends by herself.

Dirty and debris-cluttered buses and bus stops

Two of the women interviewed for the project commented that buses and bus stops are often viewed as, or actually are, dirty or cluttered with debris. For example:

You know I think there a lot of people that have a bias against public transportation because they think it's dirty, or they don't like their fellow ridership

This is not a walking city and, you know, there's trash on the ground, especially around the bus stops... I come from sort of the European model, it's like, "Let's have some flowers," but I realize that flowers on Snelling Avenue are really hard to maintain with all the salt [used to de-ice the road]. I understand what the issues are, but... people throw trash around the bus stops, they're really not very inviting... I know I'm a stickler, I understand I'm an outlier, but cleanliness is really important, especially if you want to attract middle class people to use the system daily... It's important to get people who are used to comfort [to] have a sort of a comfort... a place where they feel they can enter because it's comfortable and safe, which is what cleanliness does.

Habit and convenience

Some of the participants said that they continued to use a car for most needs, because of personal priorities, convenience, or the greater flexibility they felt they needed at the present time. Interviewers reported that these could be the core reasons that many people continue to use cars as their primary form of transportation despite a desire to use them less, and for that reason they should be given careful consideration when planning efforts to encourage greater use of alternative transportation methods. This is what the participants had to say about their continuing need for a car:

Two adults and one car can be a little difficult planning, and I think my wife felt more free, having her own vehicle at her disposal, so she could go somewhere without having to check with me every time on who needed the car more. So, it was really nice actually, to have two cars.

We really talked with [our children] when we were thinking of doing it, about how long we would keep the second car. And, as long as we had two kids who were still in and out from college or one in high school, you know, with some medical needs, we really said "We're not going to do it [go without a second car] if it's going to be greatly inconvenient for everybody."

I think that we do need a car at this point in our lives. We do need a car for doing shopping in general, get groceries, see family, see friends...we don't live in a tight knit village, the car gets used pretty much every weekend.

Advice for others wanting to reduce their use of a car

Fourteen of the 17 participants offered suggestions to others interested in reducing their dependency on a personal automobile. The ratio was split in half with 7 females and 7 males. For females, one was between the age of 40-50 [ID7?], 1 was under 30 [ID 3?], 4 were 30-39 [IS THIS RIGHT?], and one was in the 51 and over age group. As for men, two were 40-50 [ID 16 AND 18?], three were under 30 [CAN'T BE, THERE MUST BE SOME MISCODED QUOTES—THERE IS ONLY ONE MAN IN THIS AGE GROUP], and two were 30-39 [CHECK ALL NUMBERS IN THIS SECTION OF THE REPORT].

Some emphasized the importance of getting to know the systems and planning ahead, some said to start small, and some suggested weighing and balancing the costs and benefits. Others said it helps to buddy up and share resources, or creating new relationships with other community members to facilitate collaborative use of transportation resources.

Get to know the bus/alternative transportation systems

Four participants (one woman under 30, one woman in the 40-50 age group and two men in the under-30 group THIS CAN'T BE RIGHT) explained that it's best to get to know the bus system and other alternative transportation. These are some of their comments:

It's not going to be easy [giving up your car]. Like most things in life that are good for others, or the environment, or whatever, there is some type of sacrifice from you and that's what happened here. Everybody has to do their part. Maybe you take the bus two days a week. It's worth it. As you get more familiar with the routes and alternative forms, you can determine what works best for you.

Learning how to use the bus is done best by getting the schedules, and on the schedules are the routes, so you can know which one goes where. The bus system is not that bad. It can be slightly intimidating at first, especially if someone has not ridden it before, but it is easy after you have rode a while.

Know the buses, learn the buses...learn how to use the bus, like getting the schedules, like there is not that many buses. This one goes there and the other one goes to the city. The bus system is not that bad.

Start Small

Six men and four women [CHECK FOR MISCODES] suggested that people should start with small when it came to giving up their dependency on personal auto. They emphasized the value

of taking baby steps, knowing that you don't necessarily have to give up your car, but that you can keep it as a backup and work on using it as little as possible. Here are some of their comments on this subject:

Baby steps. Start somewhere. It might be, instead of driving over to Cubs because you ran out of something, walk it. Some of it depends on how far away you are from something and how much time you have. I think a lot of what you can do regarding public transportation or alternative method, some of it is about life skills as much as it is about transportation. And some people say, "Oh well, you know I can't afford to use public transportation, because I don't have the time." Start small. Make it durable. [IS THIS DURABLE, OR DO-ABLE?]

The biggest thing when you're making a change in a pattern is getting used to the new routine and not giving up. It's like a new exercise routine. If you're not used to working out you'll have your days when you want to give it up. The same goes for alternate forms of transportation.

Well, what I tell people is that you don't have to give up your car, you could park your car, and use it. And I think you have [to] change your frame of mind to that the car is second, and your car can be your fall back. And I think another thing that could come along is, and I don't participate in it, it's [the] whole car sharing program. And I think it could make it very practical, because if you do get stuck and you do need a car, you could have access to one. So I think that's another process...that's what I would say, that it's not all or nothing, and it doesn't have to be black and white...you will still generate a lot of benefits to yourself, and you will generate a lot of benefits to the environment. So it's less car, then car-less.

Take an objective look at costs and benefits

One woman (AGE GROUP) and two men (AGE GROUPS) [MAKE SURE THESE ARE RIGHT] emphasized the importance of objectively weighing the costs of using transportation other than a personal car against the benefits, in the decision to try other ways to get where you want to go. These are some examples of how they explained their own thinking process:

Financially, the major benefits have been the savings of not having a car payment, car insurance, and car repairs. The savings have been huge.

As far as (the) time component, because that is what everyone uses [as reason to keep using their car], and that is what gets a lot of people scare...but generally...depending how far you're traveling, it's a factor of two. So it takes you roughly 15 minutes to get there by car, and it will take you 30 minutes to get there on a bike. Again, depending on weather, and lights, et cetera, but within the metro area, there is traffic and things like that. It's a factor of about two roughly, so you have to take that into calculation. For me personally, 15 or 20 minutes, whether driving there and riding my bike there, there isn't a lot of difference.

Build relationships with neighbors, buddy up and share resources

Two of the women, one under 30 and other in the 30-39 age group [CHECK FOR ACCURACY], talked about the importance of networking with others and not being afraid to ask for help. They both suggested reaching out to neighbors and asking for help with transportation needs, because it strengthens the neighborhood and opens the door to reciprocal relationships. These are some of their comments:

Think creatively, don't be afraid to ask for help, like the day that there was a thunder storm and I was going to ride my bike three and a half miles to pick up my kids from daycare. I just asked a neighbor, "Could I borrow a car?" She has a car seat. I have friends that live in Minneapolis, and they were a one car family for a really long time. They had neighbors that had two cars, and they didn't really need two cars, and I think they were a little chicken to get rid of one, or maybe they did need two for some reason, but they hardly use the second one. They were willing to loan their car to my friend's family if they needed it. And so, you know, make connections in the neighborhood and figure out if there are ways that your neighbors could help you out if you get in a bind.

[It helps] if we define our world as neighborhoods, families with coalitions, and if activities that happen in the Hamline Midway Coalition area, or it begins by someone telling others on sport teams or theater group that we are trying to conserve, we are trying to rideshare and we encourage you all to sign up and share a ride. And then you don't have people running back and forth with each child, and then you don't need so many vehicles running back and forth on the same route. We all live in the same neighborhood and we are all doing the same stuff.

Take the time to plan

Three men (one under 30 and one in the 40-50 age group) and three women [AGE GROUPS?] described planning ahead as a very important part of being successful in using alternative transportation methods. These are some of the strategies that these participants suggested:

Pre-planning is really a key thing, you figure it will take a little while longer and so you plan better because you have to allow time; it takes extra time for the bus or walking or biking.

[Focus on] making sure you can make to work on time, what to do once you get to work, like changing clothes. When I was working at my other job, they had a facility there, like a shower and everything, so that was nice. You know, change, shower, change. And then when I worked up in Blaine...they had a bathroom and a shower so you could get to work a little early and shower, change and then get ready for work. Where I work now it's not set up so well, so you have to kind of take a sponge bath.

WHAT OTHER QUOTES DO YOU HAVE FOR THIS SECTION?

What HMC can do

When asked what the Hamline Midway Coalition could do to encourage the use of transportation methods other than a personal car, 15 of the people that were interviewed offered some sort of response. Comments and suggestions varied widely, including promoting benefits for people that use non-auto forms of transportation, getting more involved with policy-making bodies (transportation or otherwise), continuing its grassroots organizing efforts toward a more walkable neighborhood, and advocating for better services to the neighborhood with existing transportation systems.

Promote benefits for people using non-auto forms of transportation

Four of the people interviewed for this project (one woman under 30, one woman and two men in the 30-39 age group, and one man in the 51 and over age group) recommended that HMC promote benefits for using non-auto forms of transportation. These are some examples of these suggestions:

[Focus on] creating tax breaks for people who do use alternative forms of transportation other than personal cars.

Rideshare are a good idea but people are afraid of it and that is why I think people need some push from the top [employers].

Encourage people to ride (public transportation). Encouraging companies like 3M that will give you an auto to van-pool.

I can see that there's a possibility for employers to support using the bus.

Work with policymakers and decision-making bodies

Three people (one under-30 man, one woman in the 30-39 age group, one man in the 40-50 age group, and one woman in the 51 and over age group) made explicit references to working with policymakers and/or decision-making bodies to promote the use of public transportation. These are some of their comments:

It has to start at the policy level first: the policymakers taxing gas, increasing parking fees, and offering benefits to those who use the bus system.

I think that we need to convince people that are making allocations for transportation money, on just every level, I think we need to convince people on federal level, State level, and on the local level. I think that everybody needs to get together to and realize that it is a good thing.

I think it is important to convinced policy makers. All we need is to make it happen.

I still do not understand why there is not a movement toward mass transit in communities like this. We need mass transit right now! We need to take a political stand.

I guess [HMC could help] by advocating at City Hall for more wide bike lanes on streets and maybe converting some old railway right-of-ways to bike use, or actually running bike lanes along railroad tracks if they go straight through. It would be great if some of those existing corridors could be used for bicycling, also.

Advocate for systems change and improved urban planning

Four participants (one woman and one man in the 30-39 age group, one man in the 40-50 age group, and one woman in the 51 and over age group) recommending that HMC advocate for some type of systems change. These are some of their comments:

I think two things have to happen to help in less use of cars, that would be more practical...the sprawl has to stop, because I think it's difficult to develop mass transit for [an] extremely spread out population, it economically doesn't work. So, I think encouraging density, in general. Most people see density as a four-letter word, most people are very much against that. Most people don't like anything over two stories high, they want more space, which encourages a lot more sprawling development in the Twin Cities.

We need busing, inter-suburb bussing. We are set up, like, limited to downtown Minneapolis to downtown Saint Paul. Years ago when we were a young family and my husband worked in the suburbs, getting from one suburb to a next or getting out to the suburb when you live here, you could be on a bus for 2 ½ hours sometimes. And it's probably the same now. A lot of people that work at downtown Minneapolis, there is not structure when going out the other way, and my husband has worked in a numbers of, what do you call them, industrial strip mall places where there are laboratories. and getting to those places without a car is almost impossible.

Parking at the express bus pickup areas is limited to street parking right now. Some towns have dedicated parking for riders, and especially for the express buses.

I think it would be better for them to be much more focused on zoning issues that's compliant with public transportation...The district council was set up specifically, they were originally set up for that. The federal government sent block grant money to communities so there would be a way that citizens would directly participate and impact how the block grant money would be allocated...In terms of impacting public policy when it comes to something like transportation, I find myself wondering, "Why do they want to do the same work that the community is doing? Why do they want to duplicate things that are already being done by other organizations?" And that's for the record, by the way. And I want to make sure that that gets back to the Hamline Coalition Board and their staff, because this continues to be an issue in this neighborhood.

Work with existing systems to promote improved service

Six of the people interviewed for this project (one man and one woman under 30, one woman in the 30-39 age group, one man and one woman in the 40-50 age group, one man in the 51 and over age group) suggested that HMC work with existing transportation systems to encourage them to provide better services and expanded services to the Hamline Midway neighborhood.

As far as the bus system, the infrastructure needs to grow and the buses need to be more frequent... Maybe make the routes or rides more interesting, artistic along the way. Make people want to take the bus or light rail.

I am not car-less completely, and that is because, for most people I think, that transit system is not set up efficiently so that you could go car-less. So, I think unless we get a better mass transit system I don't think that most people would actually do it.

[Encourage] making routes available for a while to see what populations will take the bus if it is available.

I think also, in terms of right now, it doesn't make any sense for me to bike to the 94 bus stop because right now... you can't lock your bike there. So, I think that [having a way to lock the bike] would definitely be pretty good.

I would say, advocating for the addition of the [light rail] stops through Hamline Midway... into Frogtown. I know that there are some groups that are trying to advocate for stops at Hamline, Victoria... [and] it might be Dale.

More bike lanes, more parking, more traffic [systems] that will help bikers get where they need to go.

Continue or expand grassroots organizing

Five participants (one woman and one man in the 30-39 age group, one woman in the 40-50 age group, and one woman and one man in the 51 and over age group) made reference to the Hamline-Midway Coalition's former and current activities, and suggested that the organization continue or expand what it already does well.

[HMC could help by] staying connected to the groups that are working toward public transportation. I think that we need to do more and they need to do more too, to make sure that everybody in the neighborhood is aware of the possibility.

I think the Hamline Midway Coalition has been very good about bringing people together. They have been the thrust behind many of the different projects that have improved our neighborhood in the past five years. And I think if it wasn't for the coalition, our neighborhood would not be as good as it is. So, I think just bringing people together and giving those ideas and trying to figure out ways we can make things work on a grassroots level is very important.

Make it a walking-friendly area. One of the things that I do is walk from the 94 bus station home, and again, it's not a pretty walk. I think it's in terms of doing something nice for the neighborhood, to create some really nice walking spaces. I think that is a big issue.

It takes everyone working together. It takes the small meetings and the map-making and the businesses of the neighborhood, and the library, making the decisions there. To each get involved and get others involved too.

Other than what they do, they already have a transportation group that makes recommendations to the city. Otherwise, to pedestrian-friendly urban design and accommodating bicycles and other kinds of bus and vehicle traffic, they end up just being able to recommend. So, it's a louder voice but not a decision-maker, so in my knowledge there isn't anything else that they can do. I'd love to be corrected, though. The sooner they could do that, it would be great.

Meet with the director of Hancock Rec and give him papers or some forms that he could pass out to his coaches, that facilitated a ride-share—so that coaches don't have to sweat one more thing that they do not have the time for. And make it easy on them. And go to the school group, like the elementary school, and see what their afterschool activities are, where people are driving cars back and forth.

Volunteered comments regarding light rail

During the interviews, participants were not asked any questions about light rail, but many of the participants made comments about it. The interviewers reported that it appears that construction of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) is a major topic of conversation in the Hamline Midway neighborhood. [THE WRITE-UP SAID IT WAS ONLY 4 PEOPLE OVERALL, BUT WE HAVE TOO MANY QUOTES FOR THAT TO BE RIGHT—CHECK NUMBERS AND REPORT THEM BY GENDER FOR EACH AGE GROUP] XX participants made some reference to light rail coming to the Hamline Midway. Some made positive remarks, indicating that they view the addition of light rail to the neighborhood as a positive improvement in transportation options. Others were less certain it will make a positive difference in meeting their transportation needs, and some were considered it could be detrimental. These are some of the comments:

Viewed light rail as a positive improvement

XX men (# BY AGE GROUPS) and XX women (# BY AGE GROUPS) voiced enthusiasm about the light rail coming to Hamline Midway. These are some of the ways they described their perspectives on the addition of a new transportation option:

The timing thing is, I think is probably the major [positive] one. If I could grab a rail...if I could walk three blocks, grab a rail, switch, you know, at a rail station that is quiet and clean, the transitions wouldn't be an issue...".

Well, I really like the ideal about light rail, just because of the consistency.

If they build the light rail line, it'll be going right down University, so that will just add another way of getting around.

I still do not understand why there is not a movement toward mass transit, buses and the light rail train, in communities like this. We need massive transit RIGHT NOW! We need to take a political stand.

Were less certain it would make a positive contribution

XX men (# BY AGE GROUPS) and XX women (# BY AGE GROUPS) made remarks that indicate less enthusiasm, sometimes because they were not convinced that light rail would be a better option for meeting their transportation needs, and sometimes because they were concerned that the rail line might detract from some of the neighborhood's best characteristics. These are some of those comments:

I don't intend to use the light rail at all. It doesn't go where I need to go and I know, the same for my wife. The bus route that we, that she relies on will maintain service after light rail is in place, and so it would actually take her more time to get on a train to go to work than [to] use what we've got. So, it's not something that we are going to use."

I think bringing the light rail to University is going to make biking harder because it will make the lanes smaller for cars and bikes.

The light rail is supposed to be commissioned in 2012 and I think it will help more people to ride, but just as the bus has hang-ups in cold weather and walking distances to the route so will the light rail. Parking ramps where the rail stops should be important, but I do not see how they will have room. I just don't know.

I worry about the light rail because I do not want any of the historic buildings harmed in the construction of the rail. There is a lot of history on Snelling and University and I feel it needs to be preserved."

Yea, well, when they're looking at mass transit on University Avenue, they're planning on putting the stops like a mile apart, like through Frog town and the western part of St. Paul, which I think will be a huge hole. There are a lot of people in that area that need to depend on public transportation to do their grocery shopping and to do their laundry, and so asking them to either stay on the bus, or to like, get a bus and transfer to the train, I think is ridiculous. And, not serving the people in the neighborhood that would be using the train.

Appendix

Announcement e-mailed to HMC's listserve

Letter mailed to people who volunteered to be interviewed

Telephone scheduling script

Consent form

Interview script

ANNOUNCEMENT PROVIDED TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS BY HAMLINE MIDWAY COALITION

Have you tried to reduce, or successfully reduced, your use of a personal auto and increased your use of alternative forms of transportation?

If you have, please share your experiences with us!

As you may know, the Hamline-Midway Coalition has been working with community members and organizations to promote the use of alternative sources of transportation. Dr. Sandi Pierce, a professor from Metropolitan State, contacted HMC to ask if we would be interested in having her Masters in Community Psychology students complete a research project on an issue of interest to HMC and the neighborhood.

We saw Dr. Pierce's offer as an opportunity to build on the efforts of HMC's Transportation Committee by having students interview people who have tried to reduce, or successfully reduced their reliance on personal autos and tried to increase, or successfully increased their use of alternative forms of transportation. We are especially interested in what motivates people to make this change, the process they go through, barriers or challenges that make it difficult to give up a personal auto completely, solutions and strategies they developed along the way, and their suggestions for encouraging others to make this change.

If you have tried to change, or successfully changed, your methods of transportation in the past 5 years, either reducing or eliminating your use of a personal auto for some period of time, we hope that you will participate in this study. We expect that the interviews will take about 30 minutes, depending on how much you have to say. Your participation is completely confidential. Dr. Pierce and her students will not share information about who was interviewed or what they said with HMC or anyone else, and your name will not be used in any report or communication about the project.

The students need to begin scheduling interviews on February 17, and will be required to complete and transcribe all interviews between February 24 and March 10. Dr. Pierce and her students will be analyzing all of the interviews from mid-March through the end of April, and will produce a report on their findings by early June.

We truly hope you will volunteer to participate. We feel that the experiences of people who have decreased their use of a personal auto and increased their use of non-auto transportation can be of tremendous use to Hamline-Midway Coalition and any individuals or organizations hoping to facilitate this change in their own communities.

To volunteer to be interviewed, please contact Hamline Midway Coalition at (651) 646-1987. We will ask for your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address if you have one. We will not use this information for any purpose except to send you a letter describing the research project and to create a list for students to use in scheduling interviews. This information will be destroyed as soon as all interviews are completed, and will not be shared with anyone else or used for any other purpose.

If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to call me at 651-646-1986, or Dr. Pierce at (651) 247-9581.

LETTER MAILED TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS BY HAMLINE MIDWAY COALITION

February 1, 2009

Dear <Name>

As you know, the Hamline-Midway Coalition has been working with community members and organizations to promote the use of alternative sources of transportation. Dr. Sandi Pierce, a professor from Metropolitan State University's "Masters in Community Psychology Program", contacted us to inquire if we would be interested in having her students complete a project interviewing people in the community about issues important to them. We saw Dr. Pierce's offer as an opportunity to get feedback from you and others who have tried to reduce, or already reduced, their reliance on personal autos about their experiences. We are especially interested in such things as your motivation for making this change, the process you went through, any barriers you encountered that made it difficult to give up a personal auto completely, solutions and strategies you developed along the way, and your suggestions for others considering such a change or wanting to encourage others to do so.

The project will be conducting a total of 18 to 20 interviews, with each student completing two (2) interviews. We have created a list of about 40 people in the Hamline Midway who have either tried to reduce or successfully reduced their dependency on personal autos (including you), and provided it to Dr. Pierce. A student may contact you within the next two weeks to ask if you are willing to be interviewed, and if you are, to schedule that interview at a place of your choosing. They are required to complete all interviews by March 10. The students will be analyzing all of the interviews from early March to late April, and will produce a report at the end of the semester. We will be happy to provide you with a copy of that report if you wish.

We expect that the interviews will take about 30 minutes, depending on how much you want to say. The students will ask to record the conversation so they can type up everything that you say, which will be analyzed along with the other 19 interviews. Your participation is voluntary, and your comments will be confidential. The names of who participated and who preferred not to participate, or what any one person had to say, will not be used in any report or public release of information about the study. Dr. Pierce will also not provide Hamline Midway Coalition with any information about who participated and who chose not to, or what any individual person had to say.

We truly hope you will agree to participate. We feel that your and others' experiences with making the transition from a personal auto to non-auto transportation can be of tremendous use to Hamline-Midway Coalition and any individuals or organizations hoping to facilitate this change in their own communities. If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to call me at 651-646-1986 or Dr. Pierce at 651-247-9581.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Jon Olson
Executive Director

Phone script:

Hi, this is <student name>, and I'm one of the students that the Hamline Midway Coalition said would be calling, in the letter that they sent. Is <insert contact person's name> available?

IF YES, CONTINUE. IF NO, ASK WHEN YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO REACH THEM.

Once participant is on the phone:

Hi, this is <student name>, and I'm one of the students that the Hamline Midway Coalition said would be calling. Did you receive their letter explaining the project my class is working on?

If the participant says yes, they received the letter, say:

Just to be sure you know why I'm calling, I'm a Master's in Community Psychology student at Metropolitan State University, and I'm in Dr. Sandi Pierce's Qualitative Research Methods class. Dr. Pierce is working with the Hamline Midway Coalition to interview people in the Hamline Midway neighborhood who have tried to reduce or successfully reduced their dependency on personal autos for transportation. The Hamline Midway Coalition is interested in learning more about people's motivation for making this change, the process you went through, any barriers you encountered, solutions and strategies you developed along the way, and your suggestions for others considering such a change or wanting to encourage others to do so.

Hamline Midway Coalition identified you as someone who has tried to make the transition or successfully made the transition to non-auto forms of transportation, who can help us understand this process. Each student in my class is doing 2 interviews between now and March 10, and we expect that the interviews will take about a half hour. I will need to record our conversation because part of my assignment is to transcribe a recorded interview, but no one's name is going to be attached to anything they say, and your participation is completely voluntary. We won't be telling Hamline Midway Coalition anything about who agreed to be interviewed or who preferred not to. My class is responsible for doing 20 interviews, analyzing what people have to say, and providing Hamline Midway Coalition with a report that they can share with community members and organizations. If you would like a copy of that report, Hamline Midway Coalition would be happy to provide you with one.

Are you okay with scheduling an interview? IF YES, SCHEDULE A DATE, TIME AND PLACE. IF THEY PREFER TO CONTACT HAMLINE MIDWAY COALITION BEFORE SCHEDULING, SAY YOU WILL CALL BACK IN A FEW DAYS. IF NO, THANK THE PARTICIPANT FOR THEIR TIME AND HANG UP.

If the participant says they did not receive the letter, say:

Well, let me explain what the letter said. I'm a Master's in Community Psychology student at Metropolitan State University, and I'm in Dr. Sandi Pierce's Qualitative Research Methods class. Dr. Pierce is working with the Hamline Midway Coalition Dr. Pierce is working with the Hamline Midway Coalition to interview people in the Hamline Midway neighborhood who have either tried to reduce, or successfully reduced, their dependency on personal autos for transportation. The Hamline Midway Coalition is interested in learning more about people's motivation for making this change, the process you went through, any barriers you encountered, solutions and strategies you developed along the way, and your suggestions for others considering such a change or wanting to encourage others to do so.

Hamline Midway Coalition identified you as someone who has tried to make the transition to non-auto forms of transportation, or who has successfully made that transition, who can help us understand this process. Each student in my class is doing 2 interviews between now and March 10, and we expect that the interviews will take about a half hour. No one's name is going to be attached to anything they say, and your participation is completely voluntary. We won't be telling Hamline Midway Coalition anything about who agreed to be interviewed or who preferred not to. My class is responsible for doing 20 interviews, analyzing what people have to say, and providing Hamline Midway Coalition with a report that they can share with community members and organizations. If you would like a copy of that report, Hamline Midway Coalition would be happy to provide you with one.

Are you okay with scheduling an interview? IF YES, SCHEDULE A DATE, TIME AND PLACE. IF THEY PREFER TO CONTACT HAMLINE MIDWAY COALITION BEFORE SCHEDULING, SAY YOU WILL CALL BACK IN A FEW DAYS. IF NO, THANK THE PARTICIPANT FOR THEIR TIME AND HANG UP.

DO NOT CONDUCT INTERVIEWS OVER THE PHONE—A CONSENT FORM MUST BE SIGNED PRIOR TO BEGINNING AN INTERVIEW, SO ALL INTERVIEWS MUST BE FACE-TO-FACE.

Informed Consent: To be read aloud

Before we begin, I want to be sure you know the purpose of the interview. The Hamline Midway Coalition is interested in learning more about how people in the Hamline Midway have either tried to make the transition to forms of transportation other than a personal auto, or successfully made that transition.

I am a student in a Master's-level course in Qualitative Research Methods, and my class is doing this research project to get some practice doing interviews and analyzing what we find. Hamline Midway Coalition provided us with contact information for 40 people in the neighborhood who they thought would be able to provide really good feedback, and that is how I was able to contact you.

It's important that you know that your participation in this project is completely voluntary, and what you have to say is confidential. My class will be analyzing the interviews and developing a report for Hamline Midway Coalition that they will share with you, other community members, and policymakers and organizations that are interested in seeing the results of the research. Your name will not appear in any report or information provided to Hamline Midway Coalition, and your answers will be combined with those of the other community members that we interview. I will need to record our conversation because part of my assignment is to transcribe a recorded interview, but no one's name is going to be attached to anything they say, and your participation is completely voluntary. After the report is written, all of the recordings will be erased and any written information about your personal interview will be shredded.

The interview should take about 30 minutes, depending on how much you have to say. If you decide that you do not want to do the interview, or if there are any questions you prefer not answer, that is okay with me. Hamline-Midway Coalition will not be told who does an interview, or who decided not to. As soon as I have finished typing up the interview, I will erase the tape recording. I'm doing this because what you have to say is important, and I want to be sure I get it right. Your name will not appear on the typed transcript—we will use only ID numbers. When we have finished analyzing all of the interviews, we will shred all of the typed transcripts.

If you are okay with going ahead, would you please sign this form? Everything I have just said is written on it, and I have a copy for you to keep, too. If you have any questions or concerns after the interview, you can reach Dr. Pierce, the professor teaching the class, or Michael Jon Olson, the Executive Director of the Hamline Midway Coalition, at the telephone numbers shown on the bottom of the form.

Participant signature

Interviewer signature

Date

Contacts for questions about this project:

Michael Jon Olson
Executive Director
Hamline Midway Coalition
651-646-1986

Sandi Pierce, Ph.D.
Community Faculty
Metropolitan State University
651-247-9581

Interview guide:

Okay, then, let's get started.

1. First, how long have you lived in Hamline Midway?
 - a. Did you grow up in St. Paul?
2. Do you use a personal auto at all, or have you completely switched to other forms of transportation?
 - a. Do you/did you own a car?
 - b. How long ago did you begin this process?
3. What forms of alternative transportation do you currently use?
 - a. Different forms for different purposes? (Errands, shopping, work)
 - b. (Probe on reasons for using each method, circumstances that cause a different choice)
4. What made you willing to go without a car?
 - a. Personal reasons, family/childhood circumstances or priorities
 - b. Awareness/education/knowledge
 - c. Ability get everywhere you need to get
 - a. Political or philosophical reasons
5. Was this a rapid decision and a rapid process, or did it take some time and planning?
 - a. (Probe on the process—decision-making to action)
 - b. Strategies or resources that made it easier
 - c. Negotiating with family or household members to meet everyone's transportation needs
6. Did you hit any bumps or barriers in going car-less that made it difficult?
 - a. (Probe for details)
 - b. What are some of the things you did to get around them? IF THE PERSON WAS UNSUCCESSFUL AND IS BACK TO USING A PERSONAL AUTO ONLY: What were the biggest barriers, and what prevented you from getting around them?
 - c. Are there any aspects of getting where you need to go that are still a bit challenging, or that you haven't been able to resolve?
 - d. (IF THE PERSON IS USING ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF TRANSPORTION AND SOME CHALLENGES HAVEN'T BEEN RESOLVED) So how do you deal with that?
 - e. IF THE PERSON IS CURRENTLY BACK TO USING A PERSONAL AUTO ONLY: Are you still trying to find a way to use alternative forms of transportation? (Describe)
7. What are some of the holes in our local transportation systems that need to be plugged if we want to encourage more people to reduce their dependency on a personal auto?
 - a. Who needs to be convinced? Start at the grassroots, start with policymakers, both?
 - b. How can Hamline Midway Coalition help with that?
8. What have been the major benefits you've experienced in making this change?
 - a. How has your life changed as a result?

9. What words of wisdom do you have for others who are considering giving up their cars?
 - a. What do you wish you'd known when you first began this process?
 - b. What's the most valuable thing you learned along the way?
10. To help us with our analysis, would you please give me a little information about yourself?
 - a. What is your age?
 - b. When asked to describe your race, what box do you usually check?

Thank you for your help. Our class will be spending the next 6 weeks finishing interviews, typing them up, and analyzing what people have to say. Our plan is for the Hamline Midway Coalition to have a report in hand no later than June 2009.