

## **Presentation to the Federal Consultation on Disability Issues (November, 2016)**

### **The GottaGo! campaign**

The “GottaGo!” Campaign advocates for a network of easy-to-find, safe, accessible public toilets for persons of all abilities, public toilets in parks, major transit stops and key public places to meet the needs of residents and tourists in all cities and towns across Canada.

#### **Without open, accessible, easy-to-find public toilets:**

- Many older adults and persons with disabilities are confined to their homes;
- People with Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis or other incontinence issues are afraid to take transit, use public parks or leave their homes at all;
- Seniors and families limit their use of public parks – often their only access to nature;

When people “gotta go”, if there are no toilets, even the most fastidious will have to take advantage of alleys, stairwells and bushes as emergency bathrooms. It is not a choice.

#### **The GottaGo! Campaign proposes that cities and towns across Canada:**

- Ensure that open, clean accessible public toilets and water fountains are installed in high traffic areas, including at all major transit nodes;
- Add at least one 24/7 unisex wheelchair accessible, direct access facility to public buildings in high traffic areas;
- Invest in at least two adult “changing stations” for severely disabled users;
- Invest in signage, appropriate hours, staffing, improvements and maintenance for existing public toilets to bring them to a standard fitting;
- Encourage private businesses in key locations (with tax or other incentives) in return for improvements to their toilet facilities, open access, oversight and signage;
- Build/install new architecturally attractive and accessible public toilets where required.

#### A bit of history

GottaGo! came together in November 2013 to advocate for a network of open, accessible, easy-to-find public toilets in Ottawa.

Since then, we have focused our attention on the lack of toilets in the plans for the LRT stations, on getting a map of toilets developed by the City and lobbying city councillors for getting toilets in the City budget. We've met with numerous community groups, participated in local events, issued press releases, media events (interviews, news articles), and created a brochure, website, Twitter and FB accounts.

Crohns and Colitis Canada has been an ongoing partner.

There are many models throughout the world

Examples of accessible, secure, clean and open public toilets – South Korea and Japan (as the 'gold standard'), New Zealand, Europe (Paris), cities in US (Portland Oregon) and Canada (Edmonton, Victoria, Montreal, Vancouver).