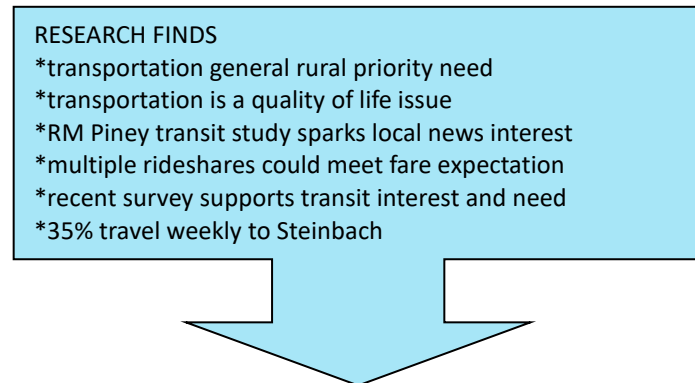
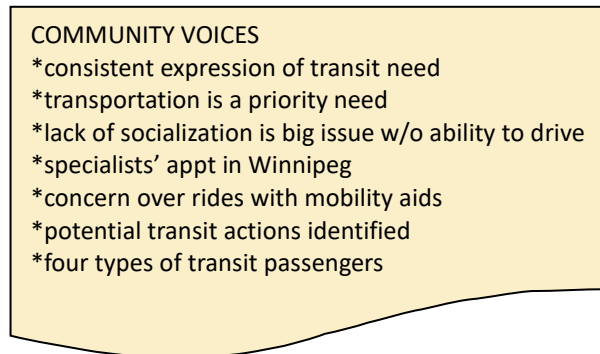


TRANSIT REPORT SUMMARY - SERIES #2

JUSTIFICATION

- Ongoing Need Identified by Communities
- 2020 Transportation Survey



Seniors have been requesting transportation support for appointments, access for services and social outings through public surveys and informally at a variety of RM forums. The desire of residents to have transportation options is a consistent need expressed in recent RM of Piney surveys:

- Transportation was ranked the highest need when respondents identified their top 3 service requirements in the October 2019 Housing Supply & Demand Survey.
- Under the RM's Age Friendly Initiative May 2018, respondents stated transportation support as one of the needs required to maintain a quality of life within the RM of Piney
- With the 75 Transportation surveys submitted October 2020, comments were supportive of the initiative especially for seniors and the often repeated the need to replace the lost Greyhound bus service.

Housing Supply & Demand Survey October 2019

Transportation was the highest ranked response to the following question:

- Knowing that you may not be able to afford certain services if you are only willing to pay certain amounts, what are the top 3 services you need/want to have in place as you get older?

On the same survey was a 30% response for social and recreation opportunities. Other comments included:

- "Lack of socialization becomes a big issue when you live alone and cannot drive anymore."
- "Transportation to medical appointment in Winnipeg with specialists a couple of times a year is what I need. I don't drive in the heavy city traffic."

- “... seniors day in Piney Hall...if you are handicapped you are not able to go ... no one is going to come pick you up. People don’t want to deal with walkers and wheelchairs.”

Age Friendly Piney Community Consultation May 2018

Individuals were asked to list the top five issues they felt needed to be most urgently addressed in their community. Forty-four participants (75%) identified at least one priority area. 47% of participants included transportation (e.g., getting to larger centres for health appointments and other events and activities by public transportation or Handi-van) as a priority area.

Priority 4 of the report included the following potential transportation actions:

- Develop a system whereby residents can share transportation costs to larger centres (e.g., Steinbach and Winnipeg) to assist those who do not drive.
- Ask residents, especially older adults, to help develop a plan to ride share which also includes the Handi-van. This would include an effective method to communicate available rides (may include Services for Seniors or the RM of Piney website).
- Research grants and costs to acquire a Handi-van for all residents in the RM of Piney who need transportation to larger centres for appointments and shopping.

2020 Transportation Survey & Communications

An open house was held in Piney September 7, in Sprague September 21 and in Woodridge September 24, 2020 with a total of 12 attendees. The RM of Piney Facebook page and RM monthly newsletters advertised the availability of the transit survey and open house dates. The RM of Piney monthly newsletter continued to provide updates on the transit project which sparked interest from a number of local news forums and local articles referenced the RM of Piney transit project.

- The Carillon “RM of Piney studies transit solutions” on September 17, 2020 by Jordan Ross
 - Update February 22, 2021 Pandemic Delays Pilot
- The Manitoba Co-operator “Rural community considers public transit options” on October 14, 2020 by Geralyn Wichers
- Dawson Trail Dispatch “Piney Tests Transit Plan” November 2020 issue by Marianne Curtis

The transportation survey yielded 75 responses.

Ridership is based on passengers and their transit preferences. Based on local community consultation, longer distance travel is a more sought after service rather than local travel within a resident’s own community. With a third of residents in the RM of Piney being 60 years old and

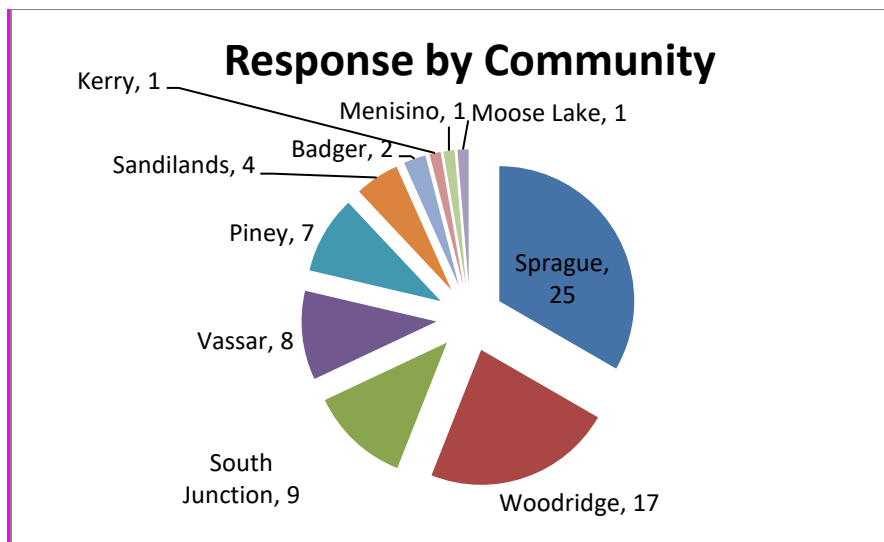
better, this group is referenced here as “seniors” to distinguish their transit requirement while the term “passengers” includes all age groups. Seniors were 51% of survey respondents.

❖ Consultation revealed four primary types of transit passengers, although other travel needs and destinations were identified:

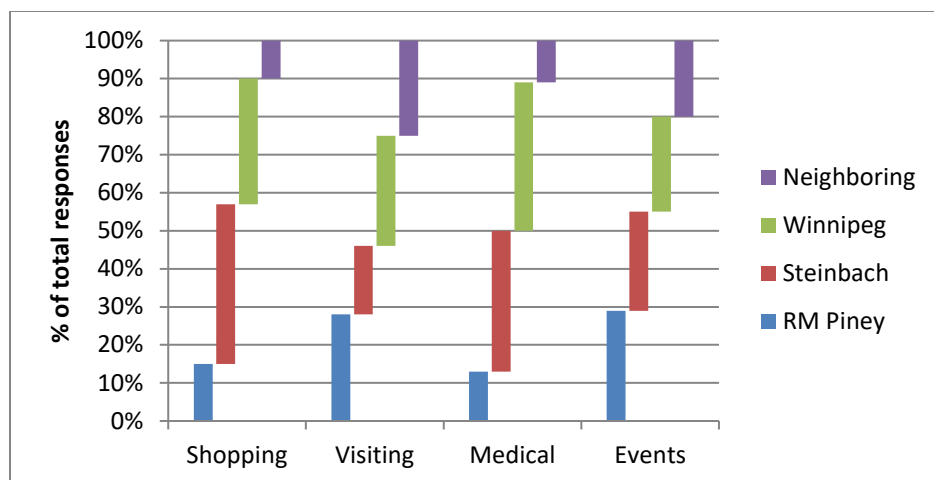
- 1) Seniors requirement to travel to a variety of locations for a medical appointments
 - Steinbach, Winnipeg, Morden, Altona, St. Anne
- 2) Seniors attending community activities including social group outings, day programs, congregate meals, as well as visiting within the RM or neighbouring municipalities
- 3) Passengers who want to shop in a wide variety of stores or obtain services in Steinbach and Winnipeg
- 4) Passengers interested to travel either within the RM, to Steinbach or Winnipeg for events or attractions.

Several inquiries were also made for travel to Roseau and Warroad in the USA. Survey respondents indicated that such travel would support medical, shopping and other purposes.

Survey Highlights



- The two largest communities of Sprague and Woodridge provided 42 of the 75 responses
 - Survey was also provided to neighboring areas, Moose Lake and Buffalo Point, as both are without transit
- 35% of survey respondents make a trip to Steinbach weekly, 27% go monthly, while 20% go to Winnipeg monthly and 51% sometimes. Shopping and medical purposes were selected as primary purposes for travel to Steinbach and Winnipeg.
- Travelling for events in the RM of Piney ranked slightly higher in frequency than travelling elsewhere.
- 48% would consider parcel pickup/delivery to Steinbach, 32% no, 20% no answer.
- Comments supported the need for transit especially for seniors and those without access to a vehicle. Those that do not need the service currently know others that need it and would appreciate knowing the service is available when they are in need.



- The range of a round trip from a community to Steinbach varied considerably within each community itself. On average people are willing to pay an equivalent of 20 cents per kilometre considering the wide range of potential fares provided in the survey.
- See Appendix 1 for more survey result details.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Older population in isolated, physically large area
- Sprague and Woodridge largest although no central community

COMMUNITY VOICES

- *quiet, rural lifestyle
- *some return to area for retirement
- *deep community roots
- *some moved away for more services, socialization
- *no central community

RESEARCH FINDS

- *35% of residents > age 60; population 1725
- *RM one of physically largest in MB
- *isolated community
- *growing interest in rural properties
- *lower than MB average income
- *maintained gravel & paved road network

The RM of Piney provides a quiet rural lifestyle at the extreme southeast corner of Manitoba, along the Canada-US border. Some residents were born in the area, some moved away for school/work and came back for retirement, and others enjoy the lifestyle with an abundance of natural resources in this area of 2433 square kilometres of which Crown land makes up 75%. As one of the physically largest of 98 rural municipalities in Manitoba, it has an extensive and well maintained transportation network with several highways connecting urban areas with each other. The paved provincial highway 12 runs east-west along the lower third of the RM and ends at the US border. For further geography details see Appendix 2.

Agriculture, forestry, industry with a number of retail, service and manufacturing businesses are in the region. The logging industry gave rise to many of the communities and continues today. There is no central community, although Sprague and Woodridge are more populated areas. Sprague is in the southeast of the RM near the US border and Woodridge is approximately 55 km northwest.

The infrastructure of roads is comprised of paved roads and gravel roads providing additional challenges with often harsh winter driving conditions. From many communities in the RM, residents travel an hour or two northwest to larger urban shopping and service areas of Steinbach and Winnipeg in Manitoba.



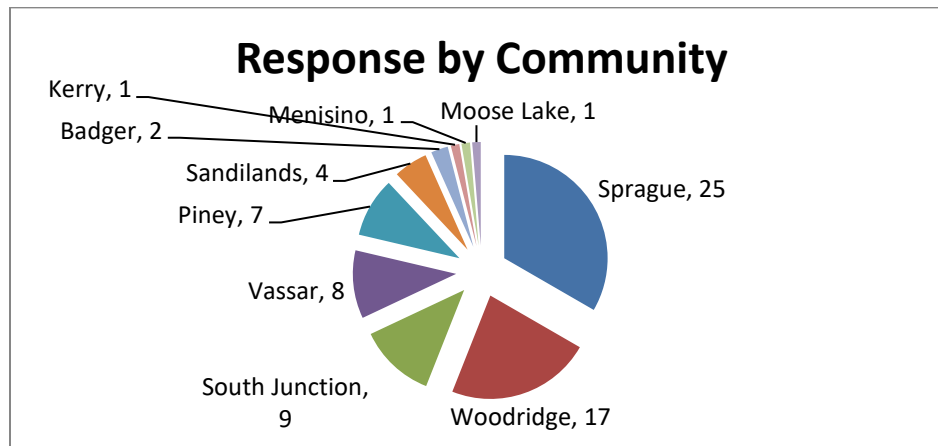
As per the latest available 2016 census, the population is 1725 with 0.7 people per square kilometre. Since 2011, the RM's population has increased by 0.3%. Seasonal residents add approximately 25% to the sparse population throughout the year with growth particularly in the Woodridge and Sandilands sub-divisions that are about 50 km from Steinbach and an additional 70 km to Winnipeg. These sub-divisions are in the northwest section of the RM and thus closer to Steinbach and Winnipeg.

There is a growing interest in the RM of Piney and other regions of rural properties especially during the COVID19 pandemic "An explosion in Piney's housing market in 2020 has left the rural municipality in a state of bewilderment and awe."¹ The latest Census identifies 610 or 35% of residents aged 60 and better and 52% over the age of 50. The median age is 51 with median total income in 2015 among recipients of \$23,962 as compared to \$34,188 for Manitoba. The income includes double the amount of government transfers in the area as compared to the Manitoba average. Manitoba's population of seniors is expected to increase by 43 per cent over the next 20 years.

¹ Pembina Valley Online "Explosion in Piney Housing Market Blowing Away All Expectations" Connor Gerbrandt, December 9, 2020 and "COVID Prompts Increased Interest In "The Rural Lifestyle", Connor Gerbrandt, May 24, 2020

APPENDIX 1 TRANSIT SURVEY RESULTS

75 transportation surveys were submitted in September/October 2020 by 51% 60+ age and 43% in the 31-60 age range. The numbers of responses by community are shown below leading by Sprague and Woodridge:



- 41% drive their own vehicle daily or 28% weekly with travel within the RM being most prevalent; 35% travel daily in the RM and 27% weekly.
 - Half as many responded going with friends and family as compared to using their own vehicle and less frequently.
 - Few travel by volunteers, carpool and none used Vita Handi transit.
- 35% of survey respondents make a trip to Steinbach weekly, 27% go monthly, while 20% go to Winnipeg monthly and 51% sometimes.
- 48% would consider parcel pickup/delivery to Steinbach, 32% no, 20% no answer.
- Two people would drive as a volunteer, ten with expenses paid and ten if provided a salary.
- The most important considerations for a transit plan are cost and schedule followed by availability and safety.
- The range of a round trip from a community to Steinbach varied considerably within each community itself. On average people are willing to pay 20 cents per kilometre. In comparison to a few other Manitoba accessible transit vans in the southeast, the charge is \$14-15/hour for a driver plus 50-60 cents per kilometre, another charges 80 cents per kilometre.
- Comments supported the need for transit especially for seniors and those without access to a vehicle. Those that do not need the service currently know others that need it and would appreciate knowing the service is available when they are in need.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC TRANSIT DESTINATIONS

The results of the September public open houses in Piney, Sprague and Woodridge and the September/October survey yielded a multitude of destinations for potential public transit. The greatest need is for longer distance travel to urban areas rather than within communities for medical, shopping and services. Four primary destinations were listed as part of the survey; within the RM of Piney, neighboring RMs, Steinbach and Winnipeg. Other current and potential future destinations are listed below for medical, shopping and social outings.

Travel for medical purposes (doctor, specialists, dentist, pharmacy) was stated as Steinbach, Winnipeg, Vita, Ste. Anne, Morden (Boundary Trails), Altona (orthopaedic), Winkler (orthopaedic), Roseau USA.

Shopping and services range from office supplies, clothing, hardware, parts, groceries and restaurants to specifics such as lumber in Grunthal and a laundromat in Vita or banking or volunteering in Winnipeg. Shopping is primarily indicated in Steinbach, followed by Winnipeg. In addition to those regions listed under medical, La Broquerie, Grunthal, Richot, Portage La Prairie and Warroad USA were also specifically mentioned as current travel locations.

Many social trip suggestions were made: Vassar pool, Buffalo Point beach, Zoo, Morden Dinosaur attraction, Whiteshell, Celebrations dinner theatre, restaurants, sporting events, casino, spring greenhouse tour. Other transportation ideas were support for the congregate meal programs and RM events in addition to the potential for garage sale tours, Fall suppers, berry picking, and occasions when liquor is served as a safe ride home.

FREQUENCY OF DESTINATIONS BY PURPOSE

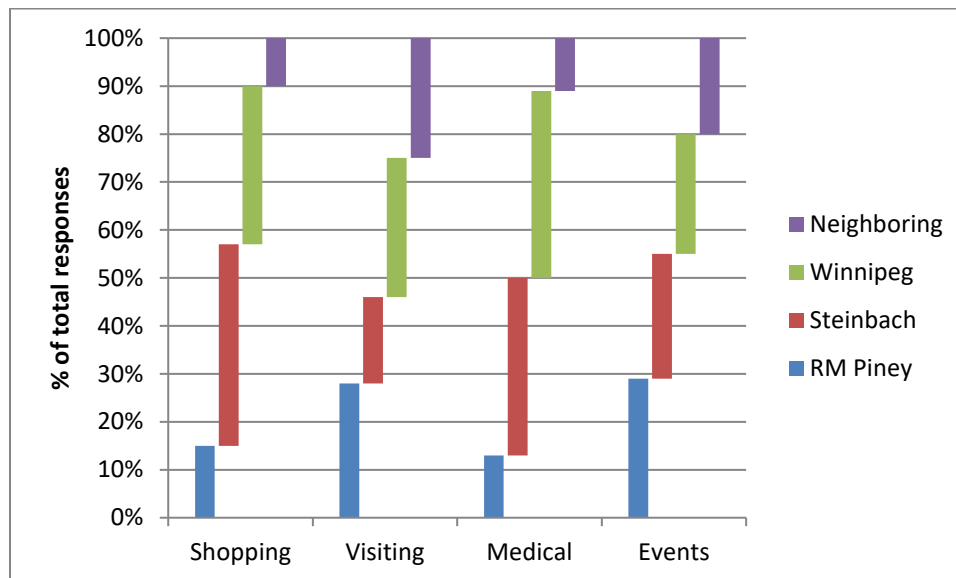
The survey listed six purposes to travel, including “other” and allowed multiple selections of the 4 destinations (within the RM, neighboring RM, Steinbach, Winnipeg). N= the number of times a purpose for travel was selected for a destination. Shopping was selected most often, followed by visiting, events and medical reasons. “Other” included medical elsewhere, volunteering, sports, funerals, church, restaurant, banking, museums, university, food bank, post office, car repairs and shuttle kids.

<u>N</u>	123	109	97	100	41	37	7
	Shopping	Visiting	Medical	Events	Other	Work	Education

In the graph below, shopping and medical is most frequent in Steinbach and Winnipeg. 35% of survey respondents make a trip to Steinbach weekly, 27% go monthly, while 20% go to Winnipeg monthly and 51% sometimes.

- 42% shop in Steinbach, 33% in Winnipeg while 15% do so in the RM
- Medical trips in Winnipeg and Steinbach account for 39% and 37% of total medical trips.

- 28% visit within the RM, 29% in Winnipeg followed by neighboring areas of 25% and Steinbach 17%.
- Event travel is fairly consistent among the 4 destinations.



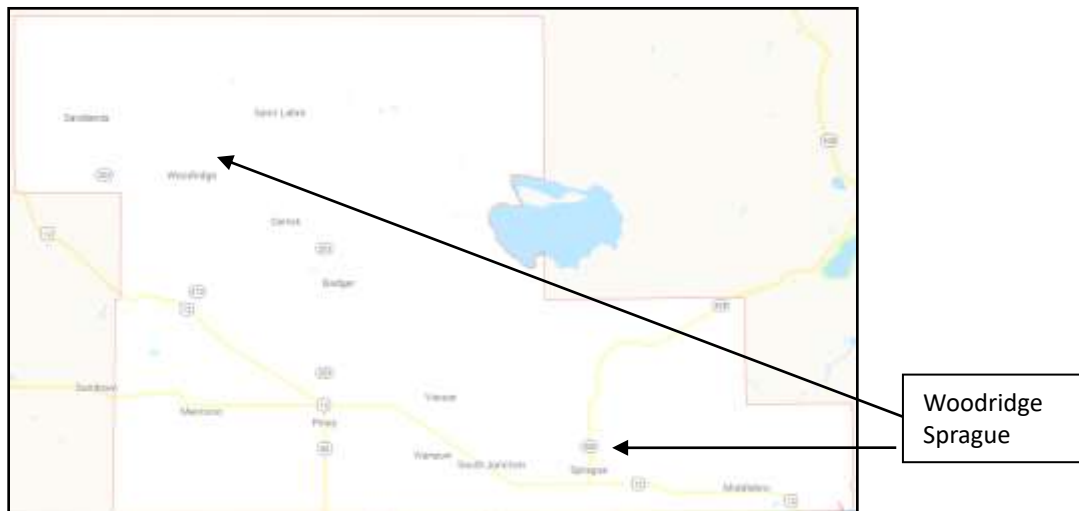
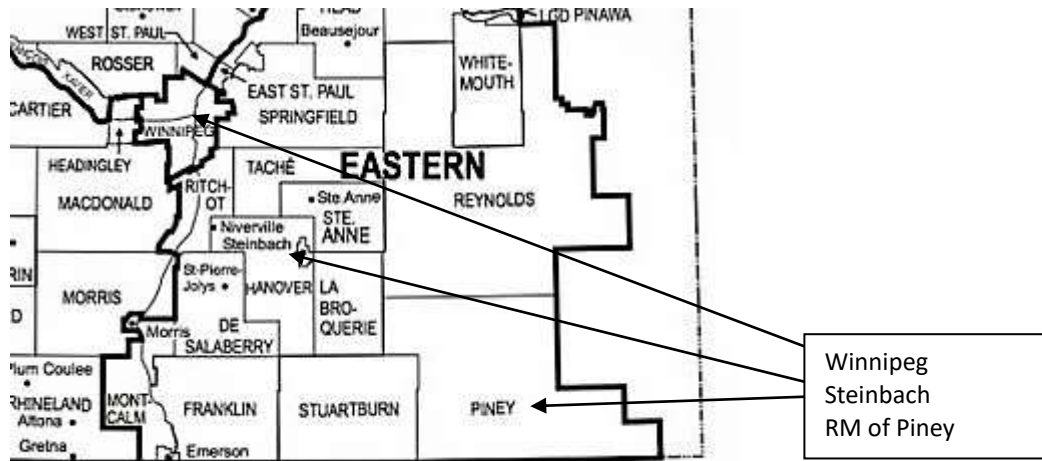
- 14 people (or 38%) noted work in the RM followed by half as many going to either a neighboring RM, Steinbach or Winnipeg for work.
- Only 7 identified travel for education with 4 being within the RM, 1 in each of the other 3 areas.
- Other purposes were selected are fairly consistent between the RM of Piney, Steinbach and Winnipeg.

October 27, 2020

APPENDIX 2 ADDITIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS DETAILS

The RM of Piney provides a quiet rural lifestyle at the extreme southeast corner of Manitoba, along the Canada-US border. The paved provincial highway 12 runs east-west along the lower third of the RM and ends at the US border. To travel further east to Ontario would require travelling 100 km through the largely unpopulated boreal forest along a winding, partially paved and partially gravel road to reach the next major highway heading east, or an additional 100 km with a return north west to Steinbach.

There is no central community in the RM of Piney, although Sprague and Woodridge are more populated areas. Sprague is in the southeast of the RM near the US border and Woodridge is approximately 55 km northwest.



Provincial roads in the RM of Piney and communities (yellow lines)