

- **TRANSIT PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATION**
- **ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT IN OTHER COMMUNITIES**

Considering the longer distance requests during community consultation, rather than shorter commutes in the communities, cost effectiveness of being able to take more passengers and the ability to accommodate mobility aids, an accessible van is recommended pending review and support by RM of Piney Council and community members. This is a preliminary recommendation based on a set of assumptions not yet reviewed and approved.

The RAM Promaster type vehicle is selected as a preferred size and configurability. It could seat 8-10 with adjustable seating configurations and is well suited for mobility challenges with a low ramp for all passengers to enter and exit. An estimated operational fare could be \$0.80 per kilometre assuming a non-profit operation assuming:

- Cost to purchase \$85,000
- Cost of ownership on average for each of the next 5 years is \$15,500
- MDTP eligible funding
- 20,000 annual km; 75% subject to fares
- Volunteer drivers and scheduling, no other associated fees
- an estimated individual fare based on \$0.8 / km could be:
 - \$58 with 3 passengers Sprague to Steinbach or \$35 with 5 passengers
 - \$29 with 3 passengers Woodridge to Steinbach or \$18 with 5 passengers



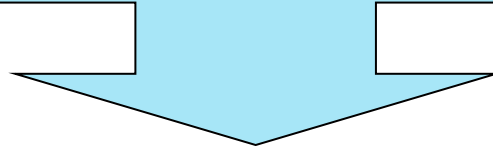
The estimated recommended fare of 80 cents per kilometre considers potential honorarium driver payments in the future and the challenges to manage start-up of operations. It will take time for people to become familiar with the use of the service and operations will need to adapt to passenger preferences. Once a rate is set, it may be difficult to increase so the assumption is made the service will be consistently supported by passengers. This analysis also assumes that there are no further restrictions or costs associated in the current pandemic environment or ongoing related costs.

OTHER COMMUNITIES

- Nearby regions
- Other areas in Canada

RESEARCH FINDS

- *handi van service in 70% of Manitoba RMs
- *MDTP funding but each operates differently
- *range of fares structures
- *rural transportation issues across Canada and US
- *financial support and partnerships required for start-up and sustainability
- *substantial reliance on volunteers



A. NEARBY REGIONS

Available transit in other southeast Manitoba regions, their respective population, land density and the number of residents over the age of 60 in comparison to the RM of Piney are shown in the table below. Transit providers may have various rates available for different destinations or groups and those noted are intended as a representation.

Nearby rural municipality information and availability of accessible transit

based on the most recent 2016 Stats Canada Census and accessible transit fares

Rural Municipality	Population	% since 2011	Population density	Land sq km	Age 60 & over	Accessible Transit** per km cost + hourly driver (if applc)
Piney	1725	0.3%	0.7	2433	610	None
Montcalm	1260	-3.7%	2.7	468	270	None
Reynolds	1338	4.1%	0.4	3573	355	These four RMs share transit Flat rates in town; \$0.8 loaded km for charter
Whitemouth	1557	0.6%	2.2	701	465	
Lac du Bonnet	3121	6.5%	2.8	1101	1170	
Pinawa	1331	0.5%	1.6	2	665	
Stuartburn	1648	7.4%	1.4	1164	435	\$5 < 10km town; 0.50 + \$15/hr 3hr min
Emerson-Franklin	2537	4.0%	2.6	973	640	Emerson \$0.5 + standby + meal; Franklin \$0.5 loaded km

Rural Municipality	Population	% since 2011	Population density	Land sq km	Age 60 & over	Accessible Transit** per km cost + hourly driver (if applc)
Morris	3047	1.6%	2.9	1038	530	\$0.40 + \$12/hr; medical \$0.40 + \$25 flat
DeSalaberry	3580	3.8%	5.3	671	685	\$0.50 + \$14/hr 3 hr min
St. Anne	5003	6.8%	10.5	478	1110	None
LaBroquerie	6076	16.9%	10.5	579	625	None
Steinbach (city)	14753	15.0%	1033.4	14	3155	\$5 / person + \$0.60 \$5 in town; standby \$6.25/15 min;
Hanover	15733	12.2%	21.2	742	1710	Transit by Grunthal Menno home
Other small RMs:						
Argyle	1025	-4.3%	1.3	770	345	\$7.50 / person + \$0.50
West Interlake	2162	-2.0%	1.3	1621	730	These two RMs share transit
Grahamdale	1359	0.4%	0.6	2385	445	

** a comprehensive range of rates may not be shown for all services, see Appendix 4 for further details

Each municipality operates their service somewhat different than other groups. Most operate Monday to Friday with booking 24-48 hours in advance. Booking is often based on priority for medical appointments, work, personal business, social activities and shopping. None are to be used for emergency medical travel as an ambulance service as the drivers are not qualified first responders. The scheduler/dispatcher is often someone working with seniors such as the service to senior coordinator, a volunteer or town/ RM administration. Many drivers are volunteers, some are compensated. The accessible vans are sponsored by a municipality as per MDTP guidelines and operated by a town or RM committee, service to seniors coordinator or a personal care home. Charters and non-senior trips are offered to the general public to aid financially, however, they may be bumped with requirements by seniors. Many have noted they are considering rate increases.



B. OTHER AREAS IN CANADA

The issue of how to provide and sustain rural transportation is evident across many jurisdictions in Canada with similar issues in the USA. Some operations are sustainable over a longer period and others are not. Many financial partners and contributors are required to initiate services and often rely heavily on volunteers. For more details see Appendix 9.

ASSOCIATED APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 4 NEARBY COMMUNITIES AND TRANSIT (rate information acquired Fall 2020)

RM of Stuartburn - There are two Handi-transit vans with priority to seniors and those disadvantaged. The van is also available to the RM of Emerson and RM of Piney, although according to the Transportation Survey, no one in the RM of Piney has used the service due to cost of mileage cost from Vita. The larger van requires a class 4 driver's license, while the other is a regular class 5. Other groups may be able to book but are subject to being bumped by priority usage.

Cost is \$5 / person and \$0.50 / km if more than 10 km or outside of the Vita area with your own driver. With an approved driver from their list, the smaller van or larger van is \$15 / hour plus \$0.50 / km with a 3 hr minimum. Mileage is based from Vita which is where the vans are located. Including an operating grant, a profit was realized in 2019, however as of July 2020, additional expenses are expected to be incurred with van repairs required.

It is expected that there are quite a number of commuters in the RM of Stuartburn that have made their own arrangements.

Buffalo Point – Although a van is part of a Children's First programming, there has been some expanded use with the Better Access to Groceries (B.A.G.) Program that brought fruits and vegetables to the communities in January – March 2020 during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, many residents have relied on their own vehicles or are able to make arrangements with family and friends.

Steinbach – Provides Handi Transit and taxi service. Handi transit service is provided for Steinbach residents, over 55 years old or mobility disadvantaged. The cost is \$5 / person within city limits, additional rider(s) \$5 / person, standby fee \$6.26 per 15 minutes of waiting time and outside the city trips are charged \$0.60 / km plus \$5 / person.

Steinbach Taxi serves Steinbach, La Broquerie and Southeast Manitoba. Hello Taxi and Southman Taxi are also available. A phone call in August 2020 requested a round trip cost with quotes that ranged widely:

- Woodridge to Steinbach (1 hr wait) and return is approximately \$150 -200
- Vassar to Steinbach (1 hr wait) and return is approximately \$225 - 400.

RM of La Broquerie – La Broquerie Taxi is noted.

RM of Desalaberry – The Handi-Transit is designed to be utilized as a means of transporting the mobility disadvantaged, senior services and the general public to and from appointments. A minivan and large van are available. The Handi-Van drivers must be selected from the approved driver's list.

As per the posted rates, clients are responsible to find their own driver for the minivan and rates are posted to various towns and destinations. For example, within town limits \$10, St. Malo to St Boniface Hospital is \$60.

The large van in St Pierre can accommodate 18 passengers. Within municipal and village boundaries the fare is \$5 / person with \$0.50 / km starting when a passenger is picked up and is charged at \$14 per hour with a three hour minimum. Other transports are listed as \$150 flat fee or \$0.60 / km after 200 km.

RM of Franklin-Emerson – Two vans serve the region, one in Dominion City and one in Emerson. The Franklin Handi van is for the use and enjoyment for senior citizens and disabled persons in the RM of Franklin. Within the town of Dominion, the charge is \$5 per trip, otherwise \$0.50 / loaded km.

The Emerson van is \$5 under 11 km, standby \$5 per 15 minutes after an hour. Outside Emerson \$0.50 / km, standby \$5 per 15 minutes after 1 hour and specified meal expenses for trips that go over a meal period.

RM of Montcalm - No transit found

RM of Reynolds, RM Whitemouth, Lac Du Bonnet, Pinawa

Four rural municipalities share Handi Transit service provided by Run by Two Rivers Services to Seniors - Town of Lac du Bonnet RM of Lac du Bonnet LGD of Pinawa RM of Alexander.

Fares reflect a flat rate within town limits \$6.50 - \$10.00 one way plus \$0.80 /loaded km for charter or groups. A 14 passenger van is available for seniors 55 years and older or any individual with a mobility disadvantage, or who is hearing or visually impaired and is not able to operate a motor vehicle.

RM of St Anne – no handi transit

RM of Hanover – Handi transit is provided by Grunthal Menno Home.

The RM also advertises GoManitoba, a carpool matching tool and provided an enlarged parking at Tourand near highways 59 and 52.

RM of Morris – Handi transit is run by the Town and RM of Morris committee. There are three vehicles; a 12 passenger bus, a van and a SUV. Vehicles are also chartered by Family Services, Housing and kids workshops out of town. Fare is generally \$0.40 per kilometre plus \$12 per hour for a driver but varies in town for medical and shopping.

Other similar sized RMs with low population to land density:

RM of West Interlake- Handi transit started in 1959 and is run by a seniors support group L.I.F.E. There are three vehicles in use; a large Promaster van with rear wheelchair lift which they are also hoping to use with the hospital to enable stretcher service. The second vehicle is an older van used only for local trips and the third is a 14 seat class 4 in Eriksdale intended for charters that financially supports operations.

A Vehicle for Hire is part of the feeder system to a highway bus travelling to Dauphin/The Pas, as the bus returns at night. Two more large vans are desired to the cover area as Steeprock is 1 hour away from the central area of Ashern and Eriksdale. Vehicles are generally replaced every few years with high mileage accumulated. Lack of cell and internet coverage in the area was also mentioned as impediments to vehicle communications for safety and emergencies.

RM of Argyle – provides Handi transit with a 16 seat bus and a Dodge Caravan transportation service for personal and social service to seniors programs, kids programs, baseball team and charters. Cost is \$7.50 plus \$0.50 per km within the RM. The service is run by the RM with MDTP support for the past 5 years.

APPENDIX 9 OTHER AREAS IN CANADA

The issue of how to provide and sustain rural transportation is evident across many jurisdictions in Canada with similar issues in the USA. A few brief examples are described below.

ONTARIO

A 2014 Ontario report, “Accelerating Rural Transportation Solutions in Ontario”, describes a number of transportation case studies. The Rural Overland Utility Transit (TROUT) is the closest to the RM of Piney with a land area of 3380 sq km and abundance of gravel roads and local geography which adds both time and expense as compared to a more urban community.

It took many financial partners and contributors to assist with the development of TROUT. As it was entering their fifth year in 2014, it struggled with funding shortfalls and like other public transit it has to be subsidized to remain sustainable. Seventy percent of riders are 55 and older. It is owned by Care North Hastings charity. The charity helps clients to remain independent and stay in their homes by providing a support system and programs.

To service their population of 15,300 they have buses which service 8 municipalities and are now in their 5th year of operation and struggling with shortfalls. They support a triple bottom line approach of financial, social and economic to sustain their operations where professional drivers are also considered customer support workers and project coordinators.

NOVA SCOTIA – CUMBERLAND

Cumberland is a member of the rural transportation association (RTA) and operates with volunteer drivers since 2009. They depend on several funding partners – Nova Scotia provincial government, Amherst, municipality of Cumberland, United Way. An example of longer distance charges is a 1 ½ hr ride Amherst to Sussex NB cost is \$100 (outside NS), Amherst to Truro 1 hr ride is \$100.

ONTARIO – MEAFORD

Handi transit in Ontario's municipality of Meaford with a population of 10,000, the charge was \$8 to larger community about ½ hr away. Their rural pilot program ended in 2018 with no update as of August 2020.

ONTARIO – OWEN SOUND

In 2016, Grey County received \$100,000 funding from the Ministry of Transportation to develop a strategy to coordinate rural transportation for residents. The cost of a ride with Movin'GB is \$10 for round trips under 20km. Trips further than 20km have a flat rate of \$0.45 per km. It focused on the most underserved area. The program ended in 2018 as no further funding was approved.