

- **TRANSIT BUSINESS MODELS**
- **TRANSIT OWNERSHIP MODELS**

TRANSIT BUSINESS MODELS

- Provincial partnerships
- Market service planning
- Flexible delivery
- Provincial/municipal/local partnerships



RESEARCH FINDS

- Various business models identify “how” transit may operate
- Multiple partnerships and funding sources generally required
- Market segments may drive unique arrangements
- Potential to work with other Manitoba initiatives

A transit business model may be in the form of provincial partnerships, market service planning, flexible delivery or local partnerships. The first three are referenced in the “Developing Sustainable Transit Options in Small Communities” report by the Northern Alberta Development Council. The fourth is based on the “Accelerating Rural Transportation Options” in Ontario.

1. PROVINCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

The municipality could partner with other organizations in the province to contract for service delivery with a private company or non-profit society. The partner capitalizes on specialized skills and economies of scale to provide planning, marketing and contract administration services, and arranges province-wide contracts for vehicle and fuel purchases.

- ❖ The RM/region is likely not large enough on its own but may be worth investigating the potential to partner with other rural municipalities to develop a service replacement to the Greyhound Bus service previously serving rural areas.

2. MARKET SERVICE PLANNING

One way that smaller communities maximize ridership and stay ahead of rising costs is to focus on understanding and serving key market segments. For example, in 1999 a division of Maple Leaf Foods opened in Brandon, Manitoba, several kilometres outside the urban area. Maple Leaf workers were able to buy bus passes through payroll deduction, and Brandon Transit adjusts schedules as needed to meet unexpected variations in shift times. A recent initiative involves the Town of Niverville (45km south of Winnipeg) desire to create a loop with Winnipeg Transit to reach St Vital Mall.

- ❖ It is uncertain at this time whether such a key market segment exists for this study.

3. FLEXIBLE DELIVERY – CONVENTIONAL SERVICES

More flexible, demand-responsive approaches including dial-a-ride are used by some systems (Medicine Hat Transit, AB) to provide service during off-peak hours, or to serve low-density or rural areas. Some communities partner with taxi companies to provide feeder services in outlying areas (Welland Transit, ON.). *“Dial-a-ride” is door to door, shared ride transportation system meaning you may share the bus with others travelling in the same general direction which generally operates as a feeder to transit service in outlying areas.*

- ❖ Distance to other communities with taxis or other transit is too far to pursue at this time but may become a consideration with regional transportation opportunities.

4. PROVINCIAL /MUNICIPAL/LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Similar to item one above, but partnerships are with other municipalities, organizations, community groups or other interested parties. Options could be provincial or health care groups, retail stores, event organizers, senior groups, community organizations.

A number of organizations were found to be interested in rural transportation. Transportation Options Network for Seniors (TONS) has both an urban and rural focus and is interested in regional approaches. They host a rural handi van Facebook group for networking and support. TONS is interested in a potential regional approach to coordinate accessible vans from various communities to more efficiently use services in the province. Eastman Region Immigration Partnerships in Steinbach is reviewing transportation initiatives in the province looking for regional opportunities. The Association of Manitoba Municipalities is another provincial organization that could be approached for transit support.

- ❖ The RM/region may be able to encourage or join other initiatives to increase the rural strength.
- ❖ There may be other nearby municipalities that have accessible transit which are not fully utilized as an opportunity to pursue.
- ❖ As Steinbach is a primary destination based on community consultation, Steinbach Chamber of Commerce, auto dealerships or retailers may be sought to provide support.
- ❖ Other potential support may be pursued with RM community organizations – Southern Health/East Borderland Health, community groups, local business, Piney Chamber of Commerce, Sunrise Corner.
- ❖ The RM may consider financial or other support proposals.

TRANSIT OWNERSHIP MODELS

- Municipality
- City/town/village
- Community
- Seniors agency
- Health care
- Not-for-profit/For-profit

RESEARCH FINDS

- Various ownership models of “who” will operate transit
- Operations oversight by Board
- Seniors involvement

Ownership of transit may be a municipality, city/town/village, community, senior group/agency, health care, personal care home, not for-profit organization or for-profit organization.

In most cases, day-to-day operations are supervised by a manager or coordinator with the administration and financial aspects being overseen by a board or committee. In some cases, an advisory group assists with community outreach and planning. Transportation programs may employ both paid coordination staff and paid drivers with professional training. Three programs use a mixed model with both paid and volunteer drivers in order to meet the demand for their services within budget constraints.

In a report from Ontario, Accelerating Rural Transportation: Ten Community Case Studies, ownership was varied:

- Four owned by the municipality but run by private contractor
- Three owned and operated by non-profit organizations
- One community collaboration
- One owned and operated by municipality
- One is a registered charity and government not-for-profit organization

Ownership options in the RM of Piney could be any of the Ontario examples described above. A municipality must sponsor to qualify for the provincial MDTP grant while Southern Health and/or the Housing Coop are potential options to be responsible for day-to-day operations. Oversight by a community board could include representatives from the RM of Piney, Southern Health, Housing Co-op as well as community centers and residents across the region.