

Long-Range Transit / Special Transit Study

Transit Improvement Needs and Plans



December 18, 2006



Agenda / Presentation Outline

- Objectives & Approach
- The Vision
- Conventional Transit:
 - Key Findings
 - Strategies
- Special Transit:
 - Challenges & Opportunities
 - Strategies
- Next Steps

Transit Study – Objectives & Approach

1. Develop 5-Year Transit / Special Transit Plan

- Infrastructure Plan (service, vehicles & facilities)
- Financial Plan
- Implementation Plan



2. Develop Long-Term Service Strategies for Transit & Special Transit

3. Conduct Evaluation & Analysis of Fixed-Route & Special Transit Services

- Understand the diverse transport needs & public opinion
- Analyze Performance (Admin., Financial, Operations & Service Delivery)
- Work with the stakeholders to gain consensus for a plan

Existing Services

Fixed-Route Bus

- 800,000 revenue trips / year
- 17 buses & \$3.m (operating budget)
- Nine routes plus:
 - Evening Area Busing & Specialized Dial-A-Bus



Special Services:

(Transportation for the elderly & disability communities)

- Advanced booked, door-to-door transportation
- Approx. 1,600 registrants & 100,000 trips / year
- 10 vehicles & \$832k (operating budget)



The Vision...

Quality of Life

- Mobility options for all residents
- Ensure access work, education, health care, shopping, social or recreational opportunities

Sustainable

- Cost effective and affordable for the community
- Fiscally responsible to our taxpayers
- Environment and traffic congestion considerations (transit as an alternative to the private automobile)

Economic Development

- Position transit as the “economic engine” for community growth and prosperity
- Access to industrial / work sites

Key Findings (Transit)

- General satisfaction with:
 - Central orientation of the routes;
 - Coverage provided to high schools & malls;
 - Walking distances to routes;
 - 30-minute frequencies all day
 - Reasonable fares
 - Courteous & helpful drivers

Key Findings (cont.)

- **Weaknesses:**

- **Declining use by transit's main markets** (students, seniors & young working adults);
- **Unmet travel demands** (College/Norwood District, Ross Glen District, Hospital/SW Hill District, South Ridge/South Vista District, Crescent Heights District);
- **Service deficiencies** confirmed by stakeholder sessions:
 - lack of direct 2-way service, circuitous one-way route structure confusing to some passengers;
 - hours & days of week - service does not start earlier enough or go late enough / need for Sunday service

Improvement Needs

- **Restructure poor performing routes** (most routes confined to particular areas are poor performers)
- **Combine local & base routes to reduce transfers** (developing transfer points at the hospital & Family Leisure Centre – facilitates local feeder service)
- **Reduce travel times** in and to outlying areas (circuitous 1-way routing create long travel times)
- **Provide direct two-way service** in major corridors (in the College & Dunmore corridors)
- **Extend span of service** for shift-workers & college students (6:00am to 12:00midnight – Mon.-Sat.)
- **Extend routes to fill-in the gaps** (2-way service for City Hall, Esplanade, Library & Court House & 1 or 2-way service in growing subdivisions in West Southridge)

Transit Goals & Objectives

1. Improve Service Levels & Ridership

- Increase service hours from 39,000 to 51,000 (2009) & 57,000 (2011)
- Increase ridership from 800,000 to 1m (2009) & 1.3m (2011)

2. Improve Service Quality & Customer Service

- Schedule adherence (on-time – 95%)
- Service reliability – no cancelled runs
- Service interruptions – no exceed 20/100,000kms.

3. Improve Productivity & Cost-Effectiveness

- Financial policy addressing tax levy, fare policy & service utilization

Service Standards

- Route coverage
 - Within 95% of residents, places of work, schools, shopping, etc.
 - Within 400 metres daytime Mon.-Sat. / 800 metres evenings, Sun. & holidays
- Route Structure - Network of base & local fixed routes
- Bus Stops / Benches & Shelters - Spacing & location
- Hours of Service
- Headways
- Transfer Wait Times – no longer than 3 minutes
- On-Time Performance
- Ridership Levels
- Cost Recovery (revenue/cost ratio)

Service Plan

3 scenarios:

- ***Constrained Policy Direction***
- ***Partially Constrained Policy Direction***
- ***Unconstrained Policy Direction***

- **Preferred Strategy**
 - **Service Expansion - incremental basis / partially constrained within near-term**

Resource Plan

Staff:

- Administration: +2 FTEs by 2011
- Transportation (includes operators): + 11 FTEs by 2011
- Vehicle Maintenance: +2 FTEs by 2011

Fleet:

- + 3 low-floor buses by 2011

Facilities:

- Garage & City Centre able to accommodate expansion

Financial Plan

	2006	2011	2026
Ridership	800,000	1,300,000 (+62%)	1,800,000
Service Hours	39,000	57,000 (+46%)	73,500
Total Operating Cost	\$2.7m	\$4.1m (+51%)	\$8.1m
Operating Revenues (2011: R/C = 35%)	\$.7m	\$1.3m (+86%)	\$2.7m
Cost/Hour	\$62.57	\$66.38 (+6%)	\$106.50
Net Cost/Capita	\$35.47	\$39.74 (+12%)	\$69.29

Special Transit

Shared-ride public transit for those unable to use accessible fixed-route services

- Attractive cost per trip
- Significant trip volumes per capita
- Few refusals/denials
- Quality MHT drivers

Demand:

- By 2011: 20% increase
- By 2026: 40% increase
- Need to effectively manage demographics / travel demand
- Need to address range of functional disabilities (& assumption registrants able to function independently)

Special Transit Service

A Recommended Approach Designed to:

- Preserve the integrity** of Special Transit services for those with no alternative
- Maximize the use of investments** made in accessible fixed route transit (within *Mobility Management* framework)
- Provide flexible mobility options** with a cost-effective mix of accessible shared-ride public transportation services; and

Build on the successes of MHT's integration of Special & conventional transit services

Special Transit Service: Recommendations

More Integrated Approach With Transit

Joint Use of Vehicles -- dual purpose mode: general public & elderly/disabled for evening, weekend & low dense areas
(opportunity for future service planning incorporating the use of Special Transit vehicles)

Demand Management Strategies: Voluntary use of fixed route transit

- Trip planning
- Special Transit registrants: “free fare” on transit
- Travel training & driver training

Special Transit Service: Recommendations (cont.)

Expanded Use of Taxis / Sedans & Accessible Taxis

- Need to address municipal regulation of taxi industry

Amended Eligibility & Certification Processes

- Use of an application form reflecting “functional limitation”

Technology Plan

Marginal service expansion of MHT operated Special Transit (by 2011):

- +2 vehicles & operators
- + 1 admin. FTE
- 54% increase in operating costs

Linkage...

POLICY DIRECTION	TRANSIT	SPECIAL TRANSIT
Service Expansion / Operational Efficiencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coverage throughout City • Expanded hours of service/days of week • Direct/faster service • Access to work sites 	✓	
Service & Program Efficiencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility • Operations & scheduling parameters • Demand management strategies • Expanded hours of service/days of week 		✓
Fare Strategies (affordability) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate funding/subsidies 	✓	✓

The Vision...

Quality of Life

- Mobility options for all

Sustainable

- Cost effective & affordable
- Fiscally responsible
- Environmental

Economic Development

- "Economic engine" for community growth & prosperity

Next Steps:

Today: Accept as information

January 2007: Stakeholders & Public – *Open House*

Thank You!

Transit / Special Transportation Study



Medicine Hat Transit

