

## Public Infrastructure to Support Community Growth (Public Transportation)

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Renewed 2019

### ISSUE:

Various residents of the community, such as college students, senior citizens, low-income individuals, and immigrants, require a form of public transportation to access education and employment destinations. The City of Lloydminster has a population of 34,583<sup>1</sup>, a community of this size should offer public transportation to its citizens. A first stage pilot project of public transportation should be introduced.

### BACKGROUND:

1. Several organizations have voiced their support for an alternative transportation model. These organizations include: The Learning Council, Lakeland College, Inclusion Lloydminster, Social Services, Pioneer Lodge, Bee Fisher Centre and the Native Friendship Centre. These organizations have clients and employees who require public transportation.
2. Other communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan of similar size or smaller have public transportation including; Banff/Bow Valley (pop. 7,847), Cold Lake (pop. 14,961), Fort Saskatchewan (pop. 24,149), Hinton (pop. 9,882), Leduc (pop. 29,993), Spruce Grove (pop. 34,066), Whitecourt (pop. 10,204), Moose Jaw (pop. 33,890), and Prince Albert (35,926).
3. Public transportation has a positive economic impact on communities. Every \$1 communities invest in public transportation approximately \$4 is generated in economic returns.<sup>2</sup>
4. The retail and hospitality service sector have expanded significantly in the past decade; these industries employ lower income employees who may find the lack of public transportation a barrier to employment.
5. The lack of sidewalks on many of the main streets makes it very dangerous for students, seniors and others who must rely on walking as their only means to get around. A public transportation system would give these individuals safe options, especially in the winter time.
6. A made in Lloydminster, small-scale pilot project could be introduced. For example, start by purchasing three used 24 passenger busses, with two operating on routes.

It may be beneficial for the City to partner with an organization such as Border City Connects who could offer the services under a lean, more cost-efficient model, which the City would subsidize.

7. There are substantial grants available for public transit:
  - As of April 18, 2018, the Governments of Canada and Alberta have committed \$495.1 million to Alberta transit projects, with federal funding coming from the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF) and the provincial matching from the Green Transit Incentives Program (GreenTRIP). Under this program, Black

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. (2016). *Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census*. Retrieved from [https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/fogs-spg/desc/Facts-desc.cfm?LANG=Eng&GK=CMA&GC=840&TOPIC=1&#fd1\\_1](https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/fogs-spg/desc/Facts-desc.cfm?LANG=Eng&GK=CMA&GC=840&TOPIC=1&#fd1_1)

<sup>2</sup> American Public Transportation Association. (2016). *Facts at a glance*. Retrieved from <http://www.publictransportation.org/news/facts/Pages/default.aspx>

Diamond with a population of 2,700 received \$346,000 in provincial and federal funding for local inter-municipal transit system development.<sup>3</sup> With this program, the Government of Canada will fund up to 50% of project costs, with the government of Alberta and municipalities funding the balance.<sup>4</sup>

- Under the Alberta Community Transit Fund the program will fund 40-50%.<sup>5</sup>

8. The City's 2015 Let's Talk Transit study showed that "of those surveyed, 61% (2,546 individuals) indicated that they would use public transportation. Of those who indicated that they would not use public transportation 51% (806 individuals) indicated that they were in support of public transportation coming to Lloydminster."

The recommendation from the Let's Talk Transit study is that "There is significant public support for the idea of public transportation system in Lloydminster, but this enthusiasm is tempered with low to moderate usage projections and significant concern over public costs and fees." We believe the concern over costs is due to a full-scale transit system being presented in the study, rather a small-scale solution that is more appropriate for Lloydminster. Also, the public was not provided information on possible provincial and federal grants that Lloydminster could utilize to offset the cost to tax payers.

The recommendation of the Let's Talk Transit study is: That the City of Lloydminster does not pursue a full-scale public transit system at this time. That the City of Lloydminster continues to research and develop a model for alternate public transportation supports and system models."

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Lloydminster Chamber of Commerce recommends that the City of Lloydminster launch a small-scale pilot program of public transportation.

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<sup>3</sup> Alberta Transportation. *Approved Public Transit Projects*. Retrieved on January 24, 2019 from <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/6093.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Alberta Transportation. *Green Transit Incentives Program (GreenTRIP)*. Retrieved on January 24, 2019 from <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/5409.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Alberta. *Alberta Community Transit Fund*. Retrieved on January 24, 2019 from <https://www.alberta.ca/community-transit-fund.aspx>