

# Public Infrastructure to Support Community Growth (Public Transportation)

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Renewed 2022

## 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 31,377<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. 8,305), Cold Lake (pop. 14,961), Fort Saskatchewan (pop. 26,942), Hinton (pop. 9,882), Leduc (pop. 29,993), Spruce Grove (pop. 34,066), Whitecourt (pop. 9\*,721), 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 grants available for public transit:

The Rural Transit Solutions Fund is the first federal fund to target the development of transit solutions in rural and remote communities. It is making \$250 million in federal funding available over 5 years, beginning in 2021, to support the development of locally-driven transit solutions that will help people living in rural communities get to work, school, appointments, and visit loved ones.

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved April 5, 2022 from <https://www.lloydminster.ca/en/your-city-hall/census-report.aspx>

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

Eligible applicants can seek grants of up to \$50,000 in support of planning and design projects; up to \$3 million to help cover capital costs (e.g. purchase of a vehicle or digital platforms); and up to \$5 million to support zero-emission transit solutions (e.g. for the purchase of a zero-emission vehicle(s)).<sup>3</sup>

Additional Government of Canada public transportation grants can be found here:

<https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/transit-transport/index-eng.html>

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 municipal taxes.

## **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> Retrieved April 7, 2022 from <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/rural-trans-rural/index-eng.html>