

GREEN MOVES AU VERT



A Look at Best Practice Transit
Models for Rural Nova Scotia

GREEN MOVES AU VERT

- Rural Public Transit – Transports collectifs ruraux - Québec
- Community Transit – United States
- Small City transit – USA , B.C., other
- Inter-regional bus transport – Saskatchewan
- Rural railways – Van. Island, Gaspé, U.K.

History

- Access by sea, rivers and lakes
- Rural road network
- Railways, rural branch lines
- Growing use of automobiles post WW I
- Loss of rural passenger trains 1930s – 1990
- Loss of rural buses – e.g. Eastern Shore N.S.
- Beginning reinvestment in rural public tr.

Why rural transit?

- Sustainable development – social, economic, environmental
- Social equity – safety, access and mobility – health + (M. Labrecque 2004 for Health Canada)
- Cost-benefit ratio \$1.04 to \$5.47 (Genivar 2007)
- Regional economic development (Axworthy 1976)
- Environmental benefits – land use, congestion, fuel use and GGE reductions, reduced road kill, health improvements (OCDE, RAC, others)

Rural Transit in:

- U S A: Community transit – federally funded
For rural areas and towns & cities, incl. Handi
- Great Britain: Extensive rural bus network, rail network growing again, community railways et c.
- France: TER network, trains and buses: 20% growth in ridership in 3 years, 30% growth in next three years, huge equipment orders by railway
- Canada: No federal funding except pilot projects and a few VIA lines

Canada – rural transit exemplars

- British Columbia – BC Transit, myriad
- Saskatchewan – STC – province-wide net
- Ontario –GO, Durham, Rockland CRT, NGPR; rest is very patchy
- Québec – Politique des Transports ; support for rural transport & motor coach lines
- N.S. - King's County Transit Authority

BRITISH COLUMBIA

B C Transit: coherent programme

- Supports small town and rural transit
- Over 30 systems from Campbell River to Kimberly to Fort St. John to Nelson
- Conventional transit and custom transit
- Rural lines up & down the valleys

Saskatchewan Transportation Co.

- Provides passenger and freight services in a **safe, reliable and affordable** manner 60 yrs
- Crown Corp; est. 1946, Bd. Of Directors
- STC a provincial coach co.
- provides safe, affordable and accessible service to **275** Saskatchewan **communities**; STC buses & vans travel 3.3 mn mi per year
- Network is province-wide, 28 routes

ONTARIO

- **GO TRANSIT** has rail & bus net over whole GTA & beyond including rural and urban areas
- **Durham Transit** interlines with GO to the east
- **Clarence-Rockland Transit** ; from 3 to 16 trips x 2
- **North Glengarry Prescott & Russell Transport Board** in startup, runs excursions for practice
NGPR TB proposes bus and rail commuter service
- Many areas of Ont. **unserved** or underserved

QUÉBEC

- Transport **policy** – Politique des Transports
 - Counties (MRC) responsible for rural public transport, municipalities for ‘Adapted’ Tpt.
- Generous **subsidies** for adapted (never enough) and increasing help for r p t.
- Bus or minibus, school bus, taxi, adapté, volunteer driver in own car, carpools

Québec (cont'd)

- Development enhanced since 2002
- Growth of ridership
- Increasing integration: Shared, taxis, School bus, adapted, volunteer and now coach cos.
- Becoming widespread, 39 MRCs- ATCRQ
- Diversity of priorities and clientèles vary

Qc single wicket approach

- In Québec “le guichet unique” is fairly common and MTQ policy encourages this
- Merger of adapted and rural transit (Papineau County), close coop w. school tpt
- Creation of combined body from start (Pontiac) w. volunteers, taxis, minibus et c.
- Tendency increasing (Collines, coaches)

Coach and minibus (Qc)

Maintains existing services;

- operator may request up to \$50,000 1 yr
- Qc Transport Commission analyses finance
- The MRC and Region (CRÉ) have a year to assist financially
- ... or improve existing coach services
- ... or new start service

School buses (Qc)

- No extra permit needed to carry adults +
- Existing available seats on board may be used by agreement with school board
- 200 adults per day on school buses into Drummondville for last 20 years, NO complaints ever to Commission Scolaire
- Slow to develop in periurban areas- parents

Taxis (Qc)

- Taxi co.s may offer transport collectif (transit) by contract to Municipalities – art.7
- Vehicle carries less than 9 occupants
- MTQ adapts taxis with \$20,000 grant
- TaxiBus originally to Mt-Joli Airport; then Rimouski substituted taxis for buses in town
- + Victoriaville, Val d'Or, Laval, Montréal +

Pooling

- **Carpooling** has had ups and downs
- Federal support for schemes dried up
- Ville St-Laurent industries use with success
- Allo-Stop reports success with cities, much less in country, Ontario has banned –abuses
- Many potential passengers, very few drivers offer – **not a panacea**

Rural freight

- **Short line** railways a growing industry
- Railfreight uses **1/5 fuel** compared w. trucks
- Forest Industry Research Institute has diverted wood product movements to rail
- Rail line abandonment foolish – Windsor & Hantsport decline worrisome
- Motorcoaches carry rural freight & parcels

Freight (cont'd)

- B. t. w. – Rail freight out of ports growing
- Los Angeles and others have built dedicated container port rail lines; success stories
- One train a day vs. hundreds of trucks
- 1/5 the fuel, and 1/5 the GGE, less carbon, less noise. New low-emission locos in L A.
- The country areas benefit from less trucks

NOVA SCOTIA

- Kings Transit and Community Transpt Accessible Prog. dial-a-ride successful
- CTAP gets \$550,000 per year; 9 services province-wide
- Strait Area Transit Cooperative starts June 2008 following \$120,000 fr. Prov.
- Eastern Shore Shuttle died for want of a pittance – \$45,000/yr. Paving for 1 km?

KINGS TRANSIT

- Board of reps from County of Kings plus towns of Wolfville, Kentville & Berwick
- Services beyond contracted on 100% cost-recovery basis
- Two routes into Hants County - one doing better than the other
- Strategic plan requires review of below-av. routes

STRAIT TRANSIT

Strait Area Transit Coop noteworthy for :

- Fixed route PLUS dial-a-ride
- A cooperative - hopefully will bring in community involvement
- Diverse experienced dedicated board
- Involvement of David Gunn (Amtrak, TTC)
- Article in summer 07 Community Tpt. Mag

CTAP

- Pilot projects early 2000s
- \$450,000 operating costs, \$100,000 capital
- Requirement accessibility, have various clientèles
- Depend on municipalities, volunteers
- Transport de Clare among most successful

Next steps

- Canada: Federal financial contributions to urban transit have been growing, but not for rural transit – this requires action
- Nova Scotia : the Province may be encouraged by successes to date:
“emphasise the positive”
(N S has a lot to lose by climate change ...)

Next steps (2)

Civil society

- Document N S best
- Inventory best practice
- Do randomised needs surveys
- Advocate to all levels of gov't with results
- Be VERY persistent

Governments

- Take stock of social, health, economic and environmental costs
- Initiate cost-effective rural transit systems and move up to “level 2”
- Share costs all levels

Lessons

- A great diversity of modes of transit work
- There is no panacea – not even carpooling!
- just as not “everyone has a car” ...
- A single-wicket approach may cut costs, build synergies
- “Light” systems tend to get so successful that a move up is needed : Rimoski case.

SUMMARY

- Rural transit highly variable Prov.-to-Prov.
- Certain provinces have highly developed systems: B.C., Sask, Québec
- Others are struggling to increase transit offer: Ontario, Nova Scotia
- Some are absent from the portrait
- Citizen action is a key to improvement

Thank you for your attention



Questions?

Merci de m'avoir entendu!

Questions?

Group discussion questions

1. What do you think of Nova Scotia's current rural transit?
3. What would you like to see for Nova Scotia's transit system?
5. How do we get there?