

*Opportunities for Regional Transportation Planning Collaboration for the Southeast Region:
Priorities and Projects*

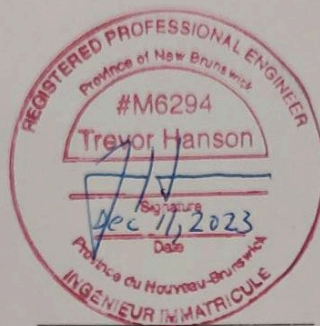
Trevor Hanson, PhD, P.Eng

For the Southeast Regional Service Commission

December 11, 2023

Disclaimer

The material in this report reflects the author's best judgment in light of the information available to them at the time of preparation. Any use which a third party makes of this report, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of such third parties. The Client assumes full responsibility for any liable action started as a result of this project.



Trevor Hanson, P.Eng

Executive Summary

The Southeast Regional Service Commission (SERSC) sent a Regional Transportation Questions/Feedback document (survey) to all municipalities/entities in the Southeast region and several stakeholder organizations within its service mandate with the goal to understand their respective transportation priorities, data gaps, and potential for regional collaboration in transportation. Responses were received from all 13 municipalities/entities within the region, as well as 8 stakeholder organizations.

Currently, only 3 of the 13 entities employ any type of transportation demand forecasting, while at least 7 of the 10 remaining entities that do not employ forecasting identified a knowledge gap in understanding the travel demands within their entity. The types of priorities identified by entities were consistent with the priorities identified by the SERSC in its Transportation Strategic Plan, suggesting a close alignment between the Region and its constituent communities in terms of a direction.

The need for understanding travel demands was consistently discussed by entities and stakeholders alike and highlights the opportunity for the SERSC to take a leadership role in developing the evidence base to support decision-making in transportation services at a regional level.

In the short term, the Region can focus on sketch planning exercises aim on understanding the present situation with respect to regional travel demand. The following represent six potential special studies and projects to support the regional transportation issues identified by municipalities/entities and stakeholders, and would be consistent with the SERSC Strategic Plan:

Early wins:

- Regional accessible and on-demand transportation (some preliminary work already done)

Other studies that can be done in parallel with regional involvement:

- Regional active transportation planning
- Regional post-secondary education travel demand study
- Regional tourism and seasonal employment transportation
- Regional airport ground transportation study and transit service development
- Regional health transportation travel demand

In the long term, there can be a parallel travel demand modelling exercise looking at the future situation, how different decisions in transportation provision and new development and population influence travel decisions (such as travelling by car, bus, bike, walking), impacts on GHG emissions, etc.).

Each project would need to be scoped to determine level of effort, resourcing requirements, and data needs.

1 Introduction

This report outlines responses by the 13 municipal entities as well as 8 stakeholders within the Southeast Region of New Brunswick. The goal is to identify opportunities for regional transportation collaboration and future special projects in support of this collaboration.

2 Methods

A survey of public officials and key stakeholders was conducted by staff of the Southeast Regional Service Commission (SERSC) in the language of choice of the public official (French or English). The survey responses were received in the months of October/ November 2023. This survey was to elicit information on five questions:

1. What are the major transportation infrastructure, service, programming or promotion priorities for your entity/community?
2. What transportation infrastructure, service, programming or promotion priorities that may benefit from involving other communities on a regional basis?
3. What plan(s) (if any) is informing your entity/community's decision-making with respect to transportation (e.g. a transportation plan, a recreation plan with Active Transportation and trails)
4. What are some data or knowledge gaps about future planning for transportation in your entity/community that would benefit from additional study and analysis?
5. What are some innovative transportation service or programming initiatives available in your entity/community or would be of interest for consideration by your entity/community?

2.1 Responding organizations

Municipal/Community responses were received from:

1. Cap-Acadie
2. Dieppe
3. Fundy Albert
4. Maple Hills
5. Memramcook
6. Moncton
7. Riverview
8. Rural District
9. Salisbury
10. Shediac
11. Strait-Shores
12. Tantramar
13. Three Rivers

Stakeholder responses were received from:

- Ability Transit
- Albert County Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Moncton International Airport
- Mount Allison University

- NBCC Moncton
- Takeoff Shuttles (Sackville)
- Université de Moncton
- Urban/Rural Rides

Further feedback from Codiac Transpo was provided during the SERSC Transportation Committee meeting on December 8, 2023.

2.2 Interpreting responses

Responses to each question were reviewed to look for themes that would allow consolidation of responses. These themes were tallied based upon how often they were mentioned by each organization. In some cases, respondents provided feedback directly related to the survey questions, which permitting the extraction of these themes in a consistent manner. In some cases, respondents provided information in the form of an email response speaking to the exercise as whole, which required some discretion in terms of how results were interpreted to be consistent with identified themes. This report is presented in English and responses that were provided in French were analyzed and presented in English.

3 Analysis of responses

A total of five questions were asked of each of the municipalities and stakeholders.

3.1 Q1. What are the major transportation infrastructure, service, programming or promotion priorities for your entity/community?''

Beginning with the first community in the list, discrete themes were identified based on their feedback, which were refined as the priorities of other communities were reviewed and identified. The following represents a thematic organization of priorities, including the number of communities that identified that priority.

Table 1: Current community transportation priorities (by theme)

	Total
Supporting older adults, persons with a disability, newcomers, those without automobile access	8
Improving Active Transportation & Trails	5
Road infrastructure (provincial)	4
Supporting employment	3
Improving public transit	3
Road infrastructure (municipal)	3
Supporting tourism	1

3.1.1 Regional considerations on identified priorities

The majority of communities in the Region identified "Supporting older adults, persons with a disability, newcomers, those without automobile access" as a transportation priority. This could be interpreted in multiple ways:

- Providing new or better transportation services to those who are unable to drive themselves
- Providing vehicles to those who are unable to afford to drive
- Improving efficient land use to reduce automobile dependency
- Developing new infrastructure and services to improve efficient use of vehicles, promote carpooling and alternatives to driving

Each of these approaches will require some kind of plan or strategy to achieve. Several communities identified improving active transportation and trails, which include regional linkages.

Some communities identified priorities with provincial road infrastructure. This does present an opportunity for the Region to help assemble and identify provincial road infrastructure priorities among its constituent communities for the purposes of helping inform provincial development priorities. The provincial road network is managed through an asset management program, but new development ideas assembled into a regional plan may help inform the development of new infrastructure at the provincial level. In addition, there may be an opportunity for a regional plan to inform the development of municipal transportation infrastructure and service that would be of regional interest.

“Supporting employment” and “supporting tourism” primarily related to the resource and tourism industries which may be seasonal in nature, and by extension, have seasonal workers. Agriculture, fishing and tourism are major economic drivers for the Region and may be located in communities farther away from public transport services. There is also some interest in transportation that helps those outside of urban centres access employment opportunities. In addition to tourism workers, transportation for tourists themselves, who in most cases will be needing to rent a car to access tourist sites through the Region.

- ***Regional consideration: the priorities identified by communities are consistent with those outlined in the SERSC Strategic Plan***

3.2 What transportation infrastructure, service, programming or promotion priorities that may benefit from involving other communities on a regional basis?

Feedback on regional priorities involving other communities than their own was organized into 13 priorities. In some cases, priorities were mentioned by multiple communities, in some cases it may have been a single community. There is a bit of overlap among some ideas, but are presented to show what was explicitly mentioned. It should be noted that just because one community may have mentioned an idea does not mean the idea would be eliminated from consideration by other communities, rather the discussion on these types of ideas has not been had among communities at a regional level.

Table 2: Potential regional transportation priorities

	Total
Supporting improved public transit linkages within communities and between communities	5
Supporting rural commuters and travellers with Active and Transit options when they arrive in cities/community hubs	3
Supporting accessible transport	3
Understanding the current landscape of transport services in region	2
Supporting rural travel to urban areas	2
Supporting Regional trails	2
Supporting ridesharing	2
Supporting newcomers, in particular for employment	1
Supporting tourism	1
Supporting Post-secondary student travel	1
Supporting volunteer transport	1
Supporting vulnerable users and older adults	1
Developing more regional service hubs	1

3.2.1 Regional considerations for communities Regional Transportation priorities

The most discussed regional transportation priority was “Supporting improved public transit linkages within communities and between communities”. This can refer to both to improvements in frequency and service of existing transit systems, as well as the ability to access this system from outside the existing service area. There also appears to be interest in helping to make active transportation a more realistic choice for commuters who are driving into larger communities.

All of the ideas mentioned by the communities have value in being retained as priorities; they may have more relevance to some communities than others, but will benefit the Region as a whole.

- ***Regional consideration: the priorities identified by communities are consistent with those outlined in the SERSC Strategic Plan***

3.3 Q3. What plan(s) (if any) is informing your entity/community’s decision-making with respect to transportation (a transportation plan, a recreation plan with Active Transportation and trails)

Nearly half of the responding communities did not identify a plan that was informing their transportation decision-making; and in some cases it may be that their role in decision-making has not been clearly defined or articulated. Five of the 13 communities reported having an active transportation or recreation plan, and these types of plans tend to be conceptual in nature; there is not an element of network or service forecasting, rather identification of needs based on broad based metrics and desire for certain types of infrastructure. Three communities (Moncton, Dieppe, Riverview) undertook a large travel demand model (Destination 2040) with the goal of forecasting future demand and a shift in demand. This included considerable data collection efforts, including a household travel diary survey. The difference

between this and an active transportation plan, for example, is the forecasting of actual trips taken and network volumes by mode of transportation.

Table 3: Type of plans informing decision-making in transportation

	Total
Active transportation or recreation plan (conceptual, no demand estimation)	5
Travel demand model (forecasting future demand and shift in demand)	3
Municipal plan (which may draw from other plans) or internal plans	3
External stakeholder plan (e.g. Health)	1
No plans identified	6

3.4 Q4. What are some data or knowledge gaps about future planning for transportation in your entity/community that would benefit from additional study and analysis?

The responses from the communities were organized into different types of data gaps as a function of what communities identified in terms of current and future planning. Two communities identified the need to better understand the future travel demand in their communities and the impacts of present-day decision-making. The majority of communities identified the need to better understand the present state of the system and demand for any new services, infrastructure or systems. Three communities did not respond to this question.

Table 4: Data gaps by community size

Data gaps	Total	City	Town	Village	Rural Comm.	Rural Dist.
Understanding future travel demand and impacts of present data decision-making	2	1	1			
Understanding travel demand (origin/destination, volumes, prospective users of systems) for services and infrastructure	7	1	4	1	1	
Currently do not have resources to undertake this	1		1			
No response	3			1	1	1
Grand Total	13	2	6	2	2	1

3.4.1 Regional considerations regarding transportation planning

There is a connection between the transportation planning practices of communities (many of which do not have plans that consider planning and forecasting for the future) and the identified gap in understanding existing conditions and future travel demands. There are 10 communities that do not have plans informed by forecasting future demand and shift in demand. Similarly, 7 communities report this as a data gap, 1 does not have the resources to identify the gaps and 3 did not provide a response.

The opportunities for the Region in this case would be to provide transportation planning support to the 10 communities that currently do not have travel demand forecasting capacity. This would help bring each

community to a common level of transportation planning capacity, while also providing a decision-making tool.

- **Regional consideration: moving forward on a regional approach to transportation planning, including travel demand modelling and quantifying travel demand for services and infrastructure, is consistent with the SERSC Strategic Plan and would benefit the communities/entities that currently do not have such capacity but see it is a data gap**

3.5 What are some innovative transportation service or programming initiatives available in your entity/community or would be of interest for consideration by your entity/community?

It was expected that if there was a transportation initiative in a specific community that went beyond typical services, such as a taxi, that communities would list it. The definition of innovative in this case was vague, as it may be that a service that would be routine in one community (e.g. Codiac Transpo) maybe an innovative approach to service delivery in another community that did not have that service.

Table 5: Available service or programming by number of communities/entities

	Total
Urban-Rural Rides	7
Destination 2040 Traffic Model	1
Extensive travel data from current service providers	1
Nursing home busses	1
2 mini buses	1
Affordable transit pass	1
Seniors coffee networking (ride sharing coordination)	1

Nevertheless, “Urban/Rural Rides” was identified as an innovative service in over half of the communities.

3.5.1 Regional considerations regarding innovative services and programming

The following represents more specific directions regarding available services or programming.

- **Regional consideration: communities see value in support for Urban/Rural Rides promotion of services and attraction of volunteers**

The identification of the Destination 2040 Traffic Model was notable, in that the three largest communities partnered on that project to identify future travel demands on the network. The model itself is valuable; the approach to the model is a standardized approach and more sophisticated approaches to travel demand modelling exist (and may be in development between the City of Moncton and DALTrac in Halifax). There is potential to investigate different resolutions of travel demand modelling for communities in the Region including sketch planning for services, and applications of innovative techniques which may be more feasible to model smaller communities given reduced computational demands. In some cases, extensive data already exists, which can be valuable for helping understand current demands and plan for the future.

- **Regional consideration: The Destination 2040 approach to travel demand modelling, as well as other innovative travel forecasting techniques such as activity-based modeling, have value as a basis for estimating travel demand in the region**

Nursing home buses have often been mentioned as a possibility for service local community accessible transport; such potential exists, though this is complicated by the need to have a driver that is available with the necessary qualifications and the availability of vehicles at the time that travel is demanded. The same issue exists for minibuses.

- **Regional consideration: While understanding the existence of community transportation assets has value, understanding the nature of the travel demanded (or activities demanded) needs to come first if such assets are to be effectively deployed**

While transit itself is a much cheaper option than owning and operating ones own vehicle, the fares themselves can still pose a barrier to those on fixed incomes.

- **Regional consideration: Explore service pricing models as a function of an appropriate cost per ride to maximize affordability and service uptake rather than based exclusively on a cost recovery model. This would be consistent with the SERSC Strategic Plan**

The idea of a social networking facilitated by transportation (e.g. Seniors’ coffee networking) is conceptually more in line with what the goal of transportation is: people demand activities, transportation facilitates access to those facilities.

- **Regional consideration: While there has been discussion about understanding regional travel demand, should there also be an exploration of routine and special collective activities on a community basis where shared transportation could be piloted?**

In terms of desired services, “health transportation” was identified specifically, as was improving the promotion of Urban/Rural Rides, and having Urban/Rural Rides in their community. This is a notable finding as health trips may constitute approximately half of the trips of Urban/Rural Rides. Each of the other desired services related to improving trail systems, intercity bus travel (i.e. Maritime Bus), and on-demand micro transit.

Table 6: Desired transportation service by number of communities/entities

	Total
Health transportation	1
Improved trails, improved promotion of Urban-Rural Rides	1
Increasing Maritime Bus offering	1
On-demand micro transit	1
Urban-Rural Rides	1

- **Regional consideration: Each of the ideas presented here suggest the need for a travel demand estimation exercise focusing on a specific service.**

3.6 Assessment of community capacity to identify priorities

The first question asked of communities was “What are the major transportation infrastructure, service, programming or promotion priorities for your entity/community?”. The responses to this question were varied; in some cases communities drew their priorities from an existing plan, others drew from professional experience and community knowledge. Five levels of priority identification emerged.

Table 7: Assessment of priority development process by community/entity size

Priorities	Total	City	Town	Village	Rural Comm.	Rural District
Priorities relate to infrastructure, service and programming/ promotion as part of a coordinated plan	2	2				
Priorities include specific infrastructure or service upgrades, possible future plan	2		2			
Priorities broadly focused on community infrastructure or service concerns	5		3	1		1
Some issues identified, but not specifically tied to transportation	1		1			
Priorities not identified	3			1	2	
Grand Total	13	2	6	2	2	1

The approach to identifying priorities shows a connection between community size/structure and the extent of those priorities. It could be expected that the larger communities, by virtue of having more responsibility for infrastructure and service, would be more likely to have dedicated staff for transportation planning and, by extension, more likely to draw their priorities from an existing plan which may include a long-term outlook and forecasting. Communities, like larger towns and villages, likely have annual capital plans that can inform their budgeting and decision-making, commensurate with the transportation infrastructure they have responsibility for.

Smaller communities, which can include some smaller towns, villages, and rural districts, identified priorities based on broad community infrastructure or service concerns. In that case, these priorities are identified through professional judgement and/or through close connections to the community. It is likely that in this case, the “magnitude” or “scope” of transportation issues is not well understood, but the “problem” (e.g. helping older adults get to medical appointments) is.

In some cases, no transportation infrastructure, service, programming or promotion priorities were identified, and this included one village and two rural communities. This is likely due to the recent municipal reform, and some ambiguity in the roles of smaller communities in the provision of transportation infrastructure and service.

3.6.1 Regional considerations on planning

The Region has communities with transportation planning capacity at either end of the spectrum. The three largest communities (Moncton, Dieppe and Riverview) were part of Destination 2040 (a large transportation planning and forecasting model) informed by household travel surveys, traffic counts and

travel demand forecasts. Some of the smallest communities were not in a position to articulate their infrastructure, service, programming or promotion priorities.

- ***Regional consideration: There is an opportunity for the Region to take leadership in the development of a Regional Transportation and Mobility Plan including the expressed goal of helping smaller communities understand and articulate their transportation needs, as well as forecasting future demands, in context of the specific or broad priorities they may identified.***

4 Stakeholder feedback

Eight stakeholders provided feedback on the same five questions posed to municipalities.

4.1 Ability Transit

Ability Transit which provides accessible transportation for residents of the City of Moncton provided background information about their operations and priorities. Ability Transit presently has one dispatcher, executive director, 12 drivers and 5 buses delivering on average 25000-26000 trips per year, door to door, to 100 - 125 calls per day, 525 to 600 clients per week. It does this on an annual budget of \$610,000. They report a monthly waiting list of 250 - 500 people and 20 or more bookings per day that they are unable to accommodate. They are reporting issues with keeping enough busses on the road to meet demand and to serve as a back up in case of maintenance issues. Ability Transit is looking to understand future transportation demands on the organization, but will need a new scheduling system (which is currently based on using Excel), and needs to identify a future location for its fleet which can no longer be co-located with Codiac Transit. Based on the presented comparables with Halifax and Ottawa, Ability Transit appears to deal with 50% more incoming calls than Halifax.

4.1.1 Regional considerations regarding Ability Transit

Ability Transit is a non-profit organization with strong organizational foundations and experience working with persons with a mobility disability. It is not an extension of any municipal or regional system, though receives some funding from the City of Moncton. They are currently limited in their ability to service residents outside of the City of Moncton, and, notable, are limited in their ability to meet the demand for their existing services. There may be an opportunity to investigate different organizational options to facilitate additional funding and service to the region, as well as understanding resource requirements to meet current and future demand.

- ***Regional consideration: Given the current backlog of ridership, funding constraints, but strong organizational foundations, helping define a regional role for Ability Transit in accessible transportation could be an immediate regional priority***

4.2 Albert County Chamber of Commerce

The Albert County Chamber of Commerce echoes the sentiments of the municipalities that responded that rural transportation is needed to key destinations and employers, as well as supporting tourists to the area and to recruit employees from a larger pool. It is currently investigating private sector solutions to their transportation issues. It identified a number of their own regional stakeholders in terms of employment and tourism.

4.2.1 Regional considerations regarding the issues of Albert County

Transportation to support tourism and employment access has been consistently identified by communities. Taking the “activity” approach of understanding demand for activities, it may be possible to assist with quantifying travel activities associated with tourism and employment and using these estimates to assess the potential to integrate with regional transportation initiatives (or if it should be its own initiative).

- ***Regional consideration: Understanding tourism and employment travel demand, and possible service delivery mechanisms, would be a priority consistent with the SERSC Strategic Plan***

4.3 Greater Moncton International Airport (YQM)

YQM identified the desire to see public transport available at the airport, as well as transport solutions to connect outlying communities to the airport and shuttle services to popular tourist attractions and downtown. It noted that many hotels already have a shuttle service. It also identified enhanced road access from Route 2/15 and it has reserved land for a new overpass at some point. YQM also identified an interest in the regional trail network, though its interest was more relating to the proximity of the trail to the airport and any risks this may place on the airport.

4.3.1 Regional considerations regarding the issues of Greater Moncton International Airport

The desire for public transport access to and from the airport would be a valuable travel demand estimation exercise; there are opportunities for sketch planning on a regional basis, and integration with existing public transit. The airport is currently in the process of collecting comments and feedback related to transportation needs. The shuttle service concept to popular tourist attractions is consistent with the Albert County Chamber of Commerce.

- ***Regional consideration: Understanding public transportation demand at the Greater Moncton International Airport would benefit the region, support tourism and employment, and would be a priority consistent with the SERSC Strategic Plan***

4.4 Mount Allison University (and Takeoff Shuttles)

The University identified the need for enhanced and safe commuting options between Sackville and Moncton/Dieppe/Riverview, including increasing opportunities for its students (job fairs, experiential learning, professional services) and the university itself (services for employees, access to broader labour market). It sees public transportation opening up opportunities for collaborations with other NB institutions as well, including English language training and employment for newcomers. It does have institutional priorities with respect to safe student life and employee work life experience, as well as the environmental impact of carpooling vs. solo driving. It identified data gaps to include “*Actual need and interest amongst students and employees in respect to public transport options, including frequency and destinations*” as well as housing availability and anticipated changes in student enrolment.

Takeoff Shuttles (which originated from students at the University) was running a shuttle service for students between Mt. Allison and Greater Moncton, though has since folded. They believe there is “considerable demand” for a transportation system, but that the volume associated with the demand is low. They have pivoted to a charter model and are seeking partnerships with local Legion branch(es), Drew Nursing Home, Tantramar Regional Highschool, and the Mount Allison population. They also mentioned the challenges associated with compliance with the Energy and Utilities Board (EUB) economic regulations

necessary for licensing and permitting. In their view, “helping remove and navigate legislative barriers to operations would be advisable”.

4.4.1 Regional considerations regarding the issues of Mount Allison University

The transportation issues of the Tantramar area and Mount Allison University are intrinsically linked. Takeoff Shuttles represented a student-led initiative to address transportation challenges of the university, and while successfully operated a service for a time, this service was not financially sustainable and has ended. This can make the development of new services challenging in that considerable time, energy and goodwill tend to go into any community transportation initiative, and a failed initiative makes it difficult to mobilize resources for the next attempt. It is typical of small community transportation initiatives where there is expressed “demand” in a community, but limited to no data on travel behaviour, meaning projects are often undertaken as pilot projects which may end before any changes in travel behaviour.

The need to access educational and employment opportunities in Greater Moncton means that there needs to be transportation linkages, but the exact mechanism of those linkages (beyond the automobile) need to be determined. There is an identified need to quantify travel demand in order to determine what type of system (or concept) will best foster a reduction in automobile dependence and help those who are unable to drive (or do not wish to drive). The issue of transportation for post-secondary students (both domestic and international) is a province-wide issue, and research focused on transportation for Mount Allison University students and faculty could have benefits for other institutions regionally and provincially.

- ***Regional consideration: A travel demand study of Mount Allison University students, staff and faculty could help build the foundation for improved decision-making regarding the provision of alternative transportation services to driving***

4.5 New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) Moncton

NBCC Moncton provided some background information on the number of students, with some estimates on their travel behaviour. There are 1700 students at NBCC Moncton, of which 900 are international students, 800 are domestic students. They estimate that most of the international students travel by bus and the majority of domestic students drive, with some walking, biking or taking a taxi. They report that students tend to look for apartments that are in walking distance and those that live farther out report difficulties in accessing the campus. It was not clear from the response whether difficulties were associated with obtaining mobility to the campus or parking access at the campus

4.5.1 Regional considerations regarding the issues for NBCC

There appear to be two types of issues facing NBCC students: availability of housing near campus and access to the campus from students who live farther from the campus. The high number of international students, many of whom use public transit, indicate the importance of effective public transportation in enabling them to meet their educational needs. Given the car-dependent nature of New Brunswick communities, there may be questions regarding the ability for non-driving NBCC students to be able to meet their needs, especially if available housing is not near the campus or other amenities. There may be an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the transportation challenges of NBCC Moncton students, including travel diary surveys, to better understand the current state of their transportation challenges in the context of all the activities they undertake in support of attending school. There is a connection to the Mount Allison University transportation issue as well, therefore perhaps the region has a role in coordinating a study effort focused on post-secondary education student transportation needs.

- ***Regional consideration: A travel demand study of NBCC students, staff and faculty could help build the foundation for improved decision-making regarding the provision of alternative transportation services to driving, and would be consistent with similar issues observed at Mount Allison University***

4.6 Université de Moncton

The Université de Moncton provided their university Sustainability Plan which included a 3 point action plan: promote active transportation on its 3 campuses (bike sharing, bike trails, etc), facilitate collective transportation for the university community, including facilitating public transit with strategic community partners, and 3, limit GHG emissions from cars and planes - no idling policy, strategic parking restructuring, vehicle charging stations, reduce driving between buildings, promote virtual participation in conferences and meetings. It did highlight the transportation initiative at the Shippagan Campus which was providing transportation through the Acadian Peninsula to the university.

4.6.1 Regional considerations regarding the issues for Université de Moncton

The action plan is focused on sustainability initiatives primarily at the operational level, with few details on the strategic aspects of these initiatives. While such figures may exist, there are no Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) regarding vehicle-km travelled, modal split (e.g. number of people travelling by bus), number of trips to and from the campuses per day. The university is one of the largest traffic generators in the Greater Moncton area, though the degree of that traffic and trip generation has not been included in this documentation. Similar to NBCC and Mount Allison University, there is potential to focus a data collection effort on understanding the travel behaviour for students, faculty and staff on the Moncton campus, including the regional commuting patterns. This may also help with transportation and transit planning in Moncton-Dieppe-Riverview.

- ***Regional consideration: Similar to Mount Allison University and NBCC, a travel demand study of Moncton Campus students, staff and faculty could help build the foundation for improved decision-making regarding the provision of alternative transportation services to driving.***

4.7 Codiac Transpo

Codiac Transpo provided feedback during the December 8th, 2023 SERSC Transportation Committee meeting which led to broader discussion amongst the group and was incorporated here. Over the last few years, there has been considerable growth in demand for transit services in Greater Moncton, driven in part by population growth, increased densification, and growth in post-secondary education attendees. The challenges facing Codiac Transpo in meeting these needs relates to ensuring sufficient financial resources to position the organization to meet this growth and availability of equipment; currently there is over a year waiting period for the delivery of a new diesel bus. Codiac Transpo is planning on developing a new growth strategy some time in the near future.

- ***Regional consideration: The growth in travel demand for post-secondary services is translating into considerable transit growth by Codiac Transpo, and there is concern that the ability of the organization to respond to this growth in terms of new equipment which on certain routes are standing room only.***

4.8 Urban/Rural Rides

Urban/Rural Rides provides volunteer transportation on a regional basis throughout the Southeast as well as expanding westward throughout New Brunswick to serve smaller communities. Their mandate is to provide safe, affordable transportation to seniors, low-income families and people living with moderate disabilities (including mental, emotional and physical) to access medical care and other essential services. Urban/Rural Rides sees the need for ongoing volunteer recruitment, as well as connecting with other entities/communities in the region that they may not be connected with yet.

Urban/Rural Rides is reporting increasing client demands in all regions of New Brunswick, with communities approach the organization to assist with their community transportation issues. They report that they know there is a need for accessible transportation but do not have accurate forecasts on the need in the rural areas and the unmet needs in the urban areas, including for trips outside their service window and medical trips. They also recognize the challenges with providing “accessible” transport services, which can include many types of disabilities (including physical, mental and emotional) as well as invisible disabilities. They see potential for sharing of accessible vehicles among families who need to use the vehicle, which would save them from having to invest in that vehicle.

4.8.1 Regional considerations regarding the issues for Urban/Rural Rides

The SERSC has provided financial support for Urban/Rural Rides which has helped the organization provide regional transportation services and expand their programming. The operational underpinnings of the organization are its dedicated volunteer pool who provide services above and beyond the driving task. There is a risk that the growth in demand for the type of service they provide will put too much pressure on the volunteer pool. In addition, medical/health trips are the most frequent trip type of the organization, trips which have found to be the most resource intensive of all trip types. As the population ages and grows, the impacts of this growth on travel demand for Urban/Rural Rides services has yet to be defined. Additional research can be undertaken to predict travel demand growth for transportation services, including the impact of medical trips, and may also want to include options that can professionalize some aspects of the transportation services that place the most pressure on the organization from a volunteer standpoint.

- ***Regional consideration: There is a need to understand the future demands placed upon Urban/Rural Rides, including potential ridership and volunteer supply, in order to ensure its long-term viability***

4.9 Other prospective stakeholders

Two key stakeholders not included in this list are the Vitalité and Horizon Health networks, with hospitals and clinics throughout the region. Quantifying healthcare travel demand is possible to do without their participation (through institutional data research at a university). “Health” trips consume the most resources of Urban/Rural Rides and was also mentioned by municipal/entity stakeholders.

- ***Regional consideration: Based on previous work in health travel demand estimation at UNB Fredericton, it is possible to develop estimates for health transportation***

5 Opportunities for potential special studies and projects

In the short term, the Region can focus on sketch planning exercises aim on understanding the present situation with respect to regional travel demand. The following represent six potential special studies and

projects to support the regional transportation issues identified by municipalities/entities and stakeholders, and would be consistent with the SERSC Strategic Plan:

Early wins:

- Regional accessible and on-demand transportation (some preliminary work already done)

Other studies that can be done in parallel with regional involvement:

- Regional active transportation planning
- Regional post-secondary education travel demand study
- Regional tourism and seasonal employment transportation
- Regional airport ground transportation study and transit service development
- Regional health transportation travel demand

In the long term, there can be a parallel travel demand modelling exercise looking at the future situation, how different decisions in transportation provision and new development and population influence travel decisions (such as travelling by car, bus, bike, walking), impacts on GHG emissions, etc.).

Each project would need to be scoped to determine level of effort, resourcing requirements, and data needs.