

2002 Annual Report

For Presentation To Membership
March 19, 2003

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Year in Review

January

- Airdrie Transit Study completed

February

- Airdrie Transit Services: Request For Proposal (RFP) announcement
- Rural Community Transportation concept proposed to Calgary Foundation

March

- Services commence with Calgary Rocky View Child/Family Services
- March 18, 2002 Airdrie awards tender to Cardinal Coach Lines
- Society name change approved at AGM
- Driver Debbie Frank receives plaque for 20 years of service.

April

- Cardinal Coach Lines begins accessible service in Airdrie

May

- MD of Rocky View approves FCSS Funding (\$21,000)
- Stakeholder meetings with MD of Rocky View, Town of Cochrane, Redwood Meadows, Springbank Lions and Big Springs Seniors Activity Centre (aka the Cochrane Seniors bus) regarding lack of transportation in Springbank/Bragg Creek area

June

- Requested City of Airdrie to stop referring Airdrie residents when Cardinal/Airdrie Transit can not accommodate their trip
- Calgary Foundation awards \$27,500 for Rural Community Transportation pilot project
- MD of Rocky View approves \$4,000 for health related-transportation
- United Way of Calgary and Area Rural Community Transportation proposal declined (not their geographic area)

July

- Bus 5 purchased (1994 Dodge Handibus) using funds from Nickle Foundation and 2002 Casino revenues. Vehicle had only 40,000 km at time of purchase.

August

- Name change approved by Alberta Government. Rocky View Regional Handibus Society

September

- School runs start
- Max Bell Foundation rejects Community Transportation proposal (not in their priorities)

October

- Board workshop: Review and revise mission statement

November

- Board Workshop: Identification of objectives for next 5 years
- Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) Conference in Calgary: strong interest in Rural Community Transportation
- Presentation to MD of Rocky View: recommendations for transportation of senior and disabilities

December

- Canadian Urban Transit Association:
 - Certificate of Recognition: Deb Frank, 20 years Safe Driving

President's Message

This has been a year of great challenges and outstanding successes. As you may be aware, the City of Airdrie moved to have transportation services, including those for the special needs community, in a bid contract system. We submitted a bid and were rejected. Although a disappointment at the time, the staff and the Board took this as an opportunity to critically review our goals and objectives.

We have changed our focus to be more regional in nature and renamed ourselves the Rocky View Regional Handibus Society. Furthermore, we assembled the staff and the Board for strategic development sessions with Ian Kershaw where we took several weeks to draw an outline for our long term goals. In turn this has brought us to a much closer relationship with the MD of Rocky View and other communities, a key component to our strategic goals. We now have a long term plan in place to help us focus on a bus replacement program and an outline of thoughtful expansion to improve service to the remainder of the MD and the outlying areas of Calgary. Moving away from our relationship with the City of Airdrie has proven beneficial to taking a broad look at our strategic options.

We have continued to move forward with raising funds for our operation with our volunteers. We had a successful casino on Jan. 1 & 2 and would again like to extend thanks to all those who helped out. We've had an unprecedented year of private foundation funding. We'd like to thank both the Nickle Foundation and the Calgary Foundation for their support.

We feel that our organization has grown stronger in the last year with much of the credit going to Paul and his tireless effort. Thank you for coming out tonight to listen to our presentation.

Sincerely,

Tim Veenstra,
President

Transportation Manager's Report

I am most pleased to report that Rocky View Regional Handibus Society is becoming known for its expertise and experience. We are one of only five organizations across Canada that operates a regional system without being an actual department/arm of a municipality. We get queries from around Alberta and the North West Territories asking for our advice.

Despite the plans and the recognition, our basic task remains -- get people to where they need to go. I would like to offer some insight as to how we keep moving forward. I recently attended a transit conference in Calgary. A discussion with a delegate from Ottawa noted; "it's not the straps, it's not the ramps and it's not the bus that makes a handibus.... it's the driver that makes the whole thing work."

Rocky View Handibus is extremely fortunate to have some of the most dedicated people I've had the privilege to work with. I thank them for getting us through this year of change.

Sincerely,

Paul Siller
Transportation Manager

Major Initiatives

Corporate Name

Last year, membership approved the name change to "Rocky View Regional Handibus Society." Known for 22 years as the "CRAB" bus, this change is a little abrupt. We are developing a new image for our buses. Watch for new logos and colours.

Fund Development Plan

Our charitable status has been historically underused in regards to fund-raising efforts. We are revising our funding strategy, developing a fund-raising plan that will factor municipalities, foundations, corporations as well as the general public. All fund-raising efforts will be in accordance with the national "Ethical Fund-Raising and Accountability Code" as well as the Alberta Charitable Fund-Raising Act.

Through an organization called "CanadaHelps.org," we have arranged a low-cost donation system on our website (www.rockyviewbus.ca). CanadaHelps allows people to donate on their credit card through a secure website. An official charitable receipt is immediately e-mailed to the donor. Funds are electronically transferred to our account. All information is kept in confidence. You have the option to donate anonymously (and CanadaHelps won't ever tell us). The only cost is the 1.85% credit card transaction fee, acceptable under the fund-raising code. We will be making use of this fund-raising tool in future donation campaigns.

Community Transportation Project

Rural handibus transportation is costly. We often travel a long distance to pick up only one or two passengers. Our traditional focus on seniors and people with disabilities may have restricted our ability to transport other community members with special circumstances. For example, we might transport a senior to a stroke recovery program yet deny transportation to a mother and infant travelling to the “new mom” course at the same health facility. When there is no public transportation in a region, our traditional disability mandate may not help the community.



In February 2002, we approached the Calgary Foundation with a concept for a different form of rural special needs transportation. We call it the “Community Transportation Project.”

The project proposes to expand our operation in a specific area, piloting the transition from on-demand handibus into a rural community bus (with a flexible route). We have proposed to link the communities of Crossfield, Beiseker, Irricana and Rocky View with service providers located in Airdrie. We would expand our criteria of who can use the bus to include a broader part of the rural community. We want to start small (and sustainable) with a once or twice-weekly schedule, expanding as demand warrants.

The Calgary Foundation awarded \$10,000 to develop this idea and \$17,500 towards the first year of operation. We have since submitted several proposals to other potential funders. We are discussing the concept with the municipalities, receiving sincere indications they would consider funding a proven community transit system. Several corporations have indicated the desirability of a small commuter shuttle. This aspect of transportation could be possible under the community transportation concept, providing funds to off-set more costly operations.

We are cautious incorporating this new operating model. No special needs transit organization in Canada has undertaken such a transition. While there are many profitable transportation opportunities available in the community transit concept, we must ensure that our original core passengers are not left aside in the rush.

Calgary Urban/Rural Transportation Committee

An initiative from the Calgary Health Region and Access Calgary (Calgary Transit) is bringing several rural transportation stakeholders together. Rural municipalities and transportation providers are discussing how collaboration might assist with urban/rural transportation issues regarding getting to services in Calgary.

Rocky View Regional Handibus has been asked to draft an initial framework of a rural transportation system. This draft will be the basis for discussion with the stakeholders, possibly with the Calgary Regional Partnership.

Municipal Highlights

Airdrie

A year ago, Airdrie revised their transportation policies, putting both their accessible and regular transit work to tender. Cardinal Coach Lines won the tender and started service April 1, 2002. Although we are no longer part of the Airdrie seniors community, we are pleased Airdrie now funds the full amount of their transportation costs. During the past contract, our work for the City suffered an operation deficit of some \$35,000 dollars annually.

One remaining problem is that Airdrie youth (pre-schoolers) still need transportation to special needs programs. Airdrie has no local special needs programs, thus families are challenged to access programs in Calgary. Airdrie felt the transportation cost of a handful of special needs pre-schoolers was excessive and revised transit policy accordingly.

Our board felt that we should continue taking children to the best programs in Alberta. For many, the development intervention they receive before their fifth birthday directly influences their readiness to learn when they enter the first grade. With the assistance of Airdrie service clubs: Lions, Lionesses, Kinsmen, Royal Canadian Legion and Knights of Columbus, we have managed to keep these children in Calgary programs. We will be actively fund-raising for this particular effort in 2003. We intend to transport as long as possible but will have to monitor the costs of this effort.

MD of Rocky View

The Municipal District of Rocky View has been investigating how to provide better transportation for seniors, youth and persons with disabilities. This effort is the result of two reports. The 2001 **Community Social Needs Assessment** indicated that the need for public transportation was greater than perceived the MD. This past summer, a **Corporate Review** proposed several organizational changes to the municipality's structure.

The Municipal District is acting on these reports with extensive re-organization in the coming year. These changes will help the MD become more responsive to its residents. We look forward to working with the MD of Rocky View.

Crossfield

Crossfield's wisdom to appoint a member of Council to our board has been extremely beneficial to us. Crossfield hosts two Rocky View Foundation facilities, thus has a significant stake in transportation for the region. We appreciate Crossfield's support.

Chestermere

In January of 2002, we made a presentation to the Town of Chestermere regarding handibus transportation. At the time, we were providing year-round daily transportation of two residents into Calgary; a special needs pre-schooler and an adult with a developmental disability. Although we

have also had other requests (dialysis, physiotherapy) in Chestermere, funding for special needs transportation has not been a high community priority.

In summer months, transportation for Chestermere residents becomes very costly as summertime closures remove any passengers travelling from Chestermere's neighbouring regions. Without other passengers, driving an empty bus to Chestermere for the short revenue trip to Calgary is cost prohibitive – especially without funding from the municipality. In June 2002, we were forced to discontinue summer transportation for the Chestermere passengers. These passengers have since found alternative arrangements.

We see the Chestermere/Langdon region as a site for a possible satellite depot. If we can position a driver/bus locally, we can save the deadheading (travelling without passengers) cost. We are continuing discussion with the local community groups and Chestermere developers such as Melcor. We have benefited greatly from interagency meetings sponsored by the South East Rocky View (SERV) Community Resource Centre. We continue to look for opportunities in this region.

Irricana

With municipal funding, the more people you help, the more funding you can access. The nature of handibus demand is not constant. Some years there is great demand. Other times there is little demand as families move or seniors pass away. When demand disappears, a municipality has trouble to justify funding the program.

Irricana has been a regular funder of handibus. The recent lack of Irricana passengers complicates Irricana's desire to fund. After a three-year hiatus, we are putting new effort into the northeastern corner of the region. Through the **Community Transportation Project**, we have been able to "kick-start" transportation in Irricana. We have been busing five Irricana seniors to Airdrie on a regular basis, developing "base-line" data on timing and resource costs for the pilot program. We will be presenting Irricana with a stronger funding proposal in the coming year.

Beiseker

Although Beiseker presently sees little handibus activity, the need for handibus service in the community is rising. Like Irricana, Beiseker has historically been a funder of handibus but has difficulty justifying funding when activity is low.

Meetings with Beiseker Village Council have been very promising. Beiseker FCSS Committee appears receptive to working with us to develop better transportation opportunities. They support the principle of the Community Transportation Project and will consider funding based on the results of the pilot program.

Cochrane

Although we don't regularly transport in Cochrane, we collaborate with both the Town of Cochrane and the Big Springs Seniors Activity Centre (AKA "The Cochrane Seniors Bus"). We look forward to continuing this collaboration with future initiatives.

Rocky View School Division #41

Rocky View School Division contracts our equipment on four school bus runs. Although our vehicles are different, we acting as any other independent school bus contractor working with the school division and are compensated accordingly.

We have some interesting runs. We take all the Airdrie students in wheelchairs to Airdrie schools. We take medically fragile students from Airdrie to the Alberta Children's Hospital school. We take students to a special needs school in Olds. We also take students from Beaupre (forestry trunk road), Cochrane and Bears paw to special education programs in Calgary.

Our recent contract negotiations with school division and the other 13 independent contractors was very beneficial to us. We appreciate the school division's support.

Capital Funding

Two provincial capital funding programs we have historically accessed are no longer available to handibus groups. As of 2002, the Wildrose Foundation will no longer consider funding for vehicles. The Community Lottery program was disbanded early in 2002. While the Community Lottery program has been replaced with the Community Improvement Program, the new program has a strict 50/50 matching grant requirement.

Handibus organizations across the province are having trouble raising the initial funds to the new program. We plan to access the Community Improvement Program in conjunction with our fund-raising campaigns. In 2003, we will be actively seeking funds to acquire two new vehicles at an estimated cost of \$65,000 per vehicle.

Nickle Family Foundation

In 2001, the Nickle Family Foundation awarded us \$5,000 towards a new bus. In 2002, the foundation agreed to support our immediate needs with the purchase of a low-mileage used handibus. This bus will be filling a gap while we develop a stronger capital campaign.

Fleet Details

Our buses are equipped to Canadian Standards Association (CSA) D409 specifications. Our vehicles are maintained by licensed mechanics and are inspected semi-annually to Alberta Transportation standards.

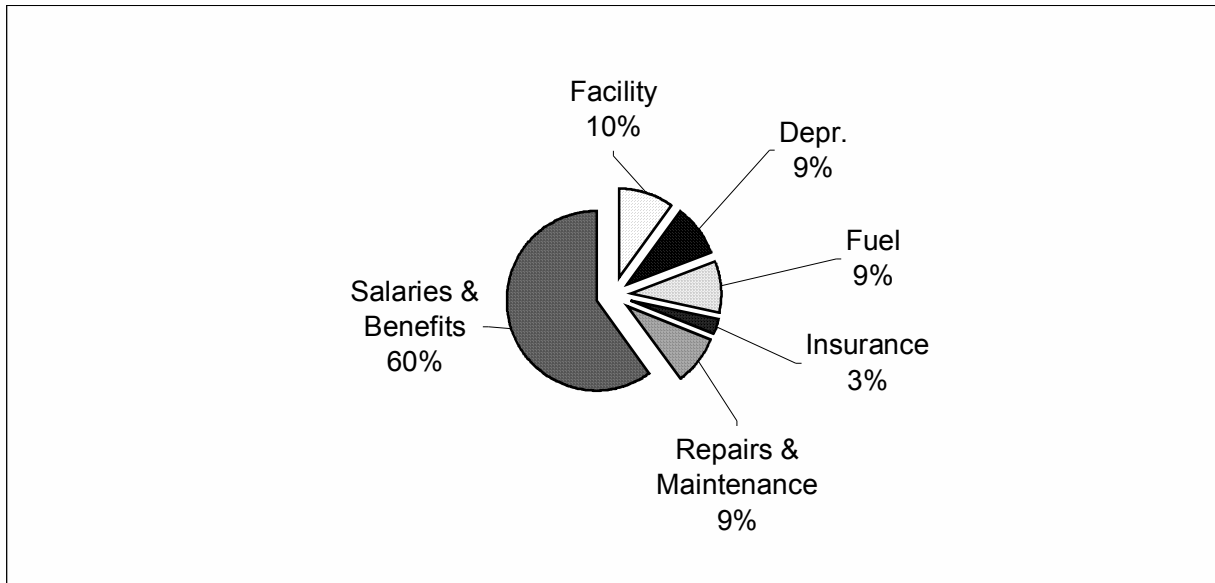
Van	Year/Model	Fuel	Seating	Comment
1	1996 GMC Rally 350	Gas	W/C: 1/Amb: 7	
2	1994 Dodge Ram 350	Propane	W/C: 2/Amb: 7	Over 450,000 kms
3	1994 Dodge B250	Propane	W/C: 1/Amb: 7	Manual ramp
4	2000 Dodge B350	Propane	W/C: 1/Amb: 10	
5	1994 Dodge Ram 350	Gas	W/C: 2/Amb: 7	formerly Beverly Care Centre
6	1995 Ford 7.3L	Diesel	W/C: 2/Amb: 15	Girardin Body
8	2000 Dodge B350	Propane	W/C: 2/Amb: 7	
12	1998 GMC/Girardin	Gas	W/C: 2/Amb: 7	Donated by R. Howden

2002 Transportation Statistics

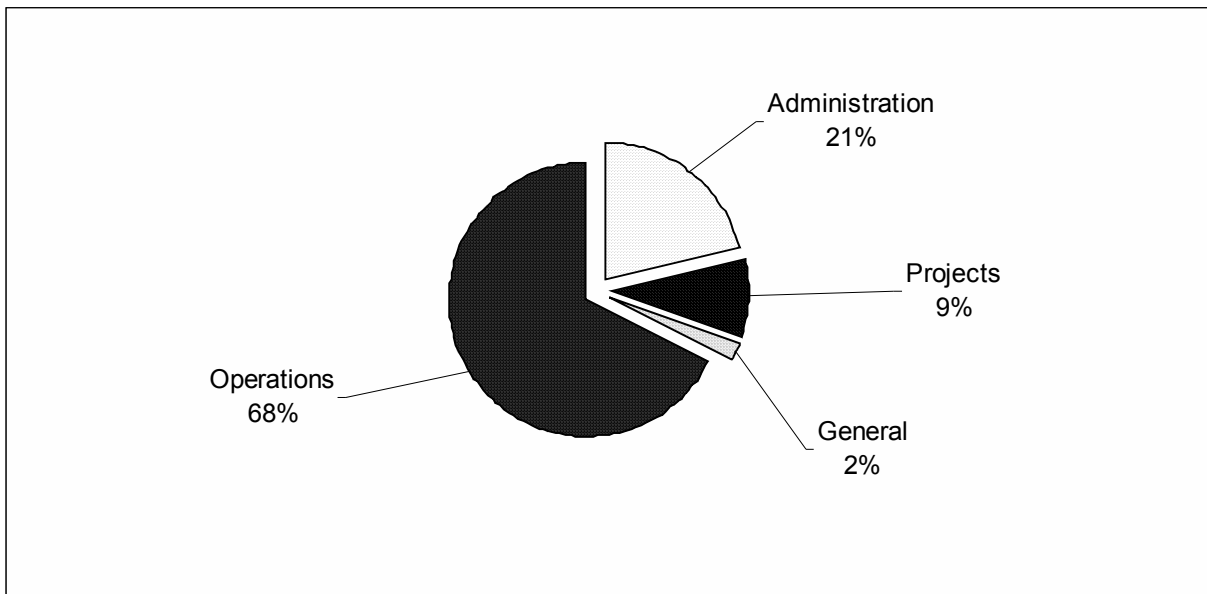
Municipality/Group		Calgary Destinations			Airdrie Destinations		
		2001	2002	Change	2001	2002	Change
School Board	Education	1287	1644	27.7%	2437	1715	-29.6%
	Total	1287	1644	27.7%	2437	1715	-29.6%
Airdrie	Education	2175	1949	-10.4%	34	68*	100.0%
	Medical	323	150*	-53.6%	626	170*	-72.8%
	Personal	223	79*	-64.6%	509	120*	-76.4%
	Recreation	128	36*	-71.9%			
	Respite		8*	0.0%	891	176*	-80.2%
	Work/Volunteer	265	127	-52.1%	311	116*	-62.7%
	Total	3114	2349	-24.6%	2371	650	-72.6%
Crossfield	Education				36	4	-88.9%
	Medical	19	49	157.9%	15	22	46.7%
	Personal	16	18	12.5%	62	80	29.0%
	Respite			0.0%	6	97	1516.7%
	Work			0.0%		0	0.0%
	Total	35	67	91.4%	119	203	70.6%
MD of Rocky View	Education	458	804	75.5%			
	Medical	127	193	52.0%	4	26	550.0%
	Personal	2	4	100.0%		53	<i>new activity</i>
	Recreation	83	84	1.2%			
	Respite	11	0	-100.0%		64	<i>new activity</i>
	Work/Volunteer	665	654	-1.7%	424	400	-5.7%
	Total	1346	1739	29.2%	428	543	26.9%
Beiseker	Medical					4	<i>new activity</i>
	Total					4	<i>new activity</i>
Irricana	Medical		1	<i>new activity</i>			
	Respite					94	<i>new activity</i>
	Total		1	<i>new activity</i>		94	<i>new activity</i>
Chestermere	Education	420	165	-60.7%			
	Respite	17		-100.0%			
	Work/Volunteer	122	96	-21.3%			
	Total	559	261	-53.3%			
Misc	Recreation	10	19	90.0%	1		-100.0%
	Respite	9		0	16	10	-37.5%
	Work/Volunteer	5	16	220.0%		2	0.0%
	Total	24	35	45.8%	17	12	-29.4%
Regional Sub-Totals		6365	6096	-4.2%	5372	3221	-40.0%
Overall Activity		11737	9320	-20.6%			

Expenses

Expense Breakdown (Major Sources)



Expense Breakdown (By Project)



Donations and Support

We greatly appreciate the support of the following:

Donors

Airdrie Kinsmen
Airdrie Lionesses
Airdrie Lions
Ann Story
ATCO Gas Employees Fund
Brian Baker
Beddington Hall Board
Claire Calder
Calgary Foundation
Geoff Cooke
Creative Restaurant Group (Calgary)
Ray Howden
Knights of Columbus
Living Springs Christian Fellowship
Elaine McCracken
Nickle Family Foundation
Royal Canadian Legion Branch #228

Affiliations

American Public Transit Association
Canadian Centre for Philanthropy
Canadian Urban Transit Association
InKind Canada

Municipalities

Town of Crossfield
MD of Rocky View #44
Village of Irricana
Village of Beiseker
Town of Chestermere
City of Airdrie

Suppliers

(these folks go above and beyond for us)

Airdrie Automotive
Kirkman Bus Sales
Lee's Automotive Electric
OK Tire (Airdrie)
Par Auto Parts
Rich Safety
Raven Performance

Collaborating Organizations

Alberta Kidney Foundation
Alberta Transportation
Bethany Care Centre (Airdrie)
Big Springs Seniors Activity Centre (aka
"Cochrane Handibus")
Calgary Children's Village
Calgary Community Network Association
Calgary Foundation
Calgary Handibus Association
Calgary Health Region
Home Care
Volunteer Services (Airdrie)
Southern Alberta Renal Unit
Airdrie/Rocky View Health Project
Calgary/Rocky View Child and Family
Services –(MST 9)
Calgary Separate School Board
Calgary Transit/Access Calgary
Calgary Vocational Services
Catholic Family Services/Louise Dean Centre
Fletcher Village (Airdrie)
Horizon School (Olds)
Indefinite Arts Society
KIK Seniors (Irricana)
Margaret House (Society for the Treatment of
Autism)
Municipal District of Rocky View FCSS
Board
North Rocky View Community Resource
Centre
Prince of Peace Village
Providence Children's Centre
Quest Children's Society
Renfrew Educational Services
Rocky View Foundation
Rocky View School Division #41
Royal Canadian Legion #288 (Airdrie)
South East Rocky View Community Resource
Centre