COMMON GOOD SOLUTIONS

Transportation Innovation Lab
Prototyping Phase
Business and Launch Plan

COMMUNITY CONNECTS BE DRIVEN.

NOVA SCOTIA
Community Services

Table of Contents

Operators' Summary

The enclosed report is intended to be a high-level overview and reference for the many partners we have involved in the Community Connects pilot, such as the CBRM Bylaws Department, Province of Nova Scotia, Lab Team, Local Advisory Committee, Community Connects Coordinators, and taxi providers. As such, the report contains a great deal of information on many different areas of the pilot so as to house most of the critical components of launch and delivery in one document.

We have created this brief Operators' Summary to enable those considering participation as an operator to quickly review critical information about the service. For those interested in learning more about the project's background or additional project activities, we encourage you to scan the remainder of the report, or come back to it to use it as a reference for further information at a later date.

Prototyping Service Description

Users

Community Connects users will be individuals who reside in the CBRM and require transportation to get to work, education and skill-building opportunities. The primary focus for outreach and marketing will target low-income individuals, though proof of income will not be required to qualify for use of the service.

Core Components of the Community Connects Prototype

Bookings and User Requests

Coordinators

Coordinators have been hired for the test period (April - October, 2019) to manage all user inquiries, user intakes, manage new route requests and bookings, communicate route opportunities to providers, and manage daily record keeping to monitor the service.

Requests

All new booking requests must go through the Coordinator during their regular office hours, or be recorded as voice messages for the Coordinator to return during regular office hours. While bookings are only received during office hours, the service can run 24 hours a day and 7 days a week to accommodate different transportation demands and schedules, pending sufficient demand to establish viable routes.

Routes

Service Areas

Community Connects is a transportation service that will connect the different communities within the CBRM. A community is defined as one of the five service areas under the existing CBRM Taxi

Bylaw. Only ride requests that travel between service areas will be serviced under the Community Connects program.

Building Routes

The Coordinators will manage user requests and will work on clustering the requests to build routes. Once the Coordinators have enough requests on a route to make it financially viable,[1] they will call the route into the provider(s) to see if they are willing to take that route. Shorter distance routes will require less users than longer distance routes to create a financially viable route. Whenever possible, the Coordinator will add additional riders to existing routes to continue to build them out.

Assigning Routes

The Coordinator will assign routes to all providers participating in the Community Connects service. The Coordinator must call in all new route booking requests to providers by the end of the Coordinators' shift the day before the booking request is to occur.

"To-work / school" routes:

1. Determine which service area the route will originate in (based on majority of pick-up locations)
2. Offer the route to one of the service providers in that service area (rotating the order of who is offered routes first)
3. If the first service provider refuses the route, offer the route to the next service provider on the rotating list for that service area
4. If no service providers in the home service area are interested in accepting the route, the Coordinators will go down the list and offer the route to service providers in nearby service areas.

"To-home" routes

1. Determine which service area the route will depart from.
2. Offer the route to one of the service providers in that service area (rotating the order of who is offered routes first).
3. If the first service provider refuses the route, offer the route to the service provider who completed the "to-work" route for these individuals.
4. If the second service provider refuses the route, offer the route to the next service provider on the rotating list for that service area.
5. If no service providers in the home service area are interested in accepting the route, the Coordinators will go down the list and offer the route to service providers in nearby service areas.

Maintaining Routes

If the route is more than a one-off, once it has been assigned to the provider they will continue to service that route until they no longer wish to do so or the route changes or ends. Providers who have

---

[1] Viable routes for the Community Connects service will be those that return revenues of approximately $1.15 / km to a transportation provider. This figure is based on the minimum out-of-service-area rate stipulated in the CBRM Taxi Bylaw.

been assigned a route must inform the Coordinator a week in advance if they no longer wish to service that route so another provider can be approached, and, if required, users can be informed the route no longer runs so they can make alternate transportation arrangements. If a provider fails to service a route that has been assigned to them without contacting the Coordinator, the route will automatically be reassigned to another provider, and the Coordinator will follow-up with the provider to determine the reason for the missed route. If a company misses three routes without contacting the Coordinators, they will be informed they no longer are able to participate in the pilot.

Changes to Existing Routes

During the Coordinators' office hours, all changes or cancellations on existing routes will go through the Coordinator. The Coordinator will then contact the providers to inform of the route change. During off-hour times, users will be informed of the dispatch phone numbers of their assigned taxi provider(s) so they can call in their same-evening changes or cancellations to the dispatcher directly. No new route bookings will be handled by the taxi providers; they all must be called into the Coordinator. The Coordinator will call each of the taxi providers, who had off-hour bookings for the previous evening, when they get in on their new shift to confirm and record if any changes were called into their dispatch the previous night from Community Connects users.

If a route goes below the $1.15 / km revenue ratio because of cancellations or changes to the route, the Coordinator will work to try to find an additional rider to fill the seat or to find another route for the users to join, but the route will continue. If the provider decides it is unprofitable at the lower revenue rate to maintain the route, they will have to provide the Coordinator a week's notice so the Coordinator can try to find a different provider to take the booking or provide users enough notice to cancel the route.

Service Rates

Payment for Service

The cost for the Community Connects service will be $7 flat rate / seat. All individual users will be responsible for paying the provider for their seat on each and every trip. If an organizational partner would like to pay for the seat, the Coordinator will inform the taxi provider of this request and the taxi provider will have to handle invoicing the organizational partner for payment for the service.

Payment for No Shows

As a part of the piloting plan, providers have been assured that they will be compensated for any no shows (as defined in Appendix C) during the testing period. If a no show occurs on a route, the provider must contact the Coordinator to inform them of this occurrence. The Coordinator will then contact the user to determine the reason for the no show, remind them of the rules about calling in cancellations, and inform them of the number of chances they have before they are ineligible for use of the service. At the end of the month, the number of no shows will be tallied and a cheque will be sent to each eligible provider to cover the cost of the no shows they reported. If there are discrepancies in the no shows reported by providers, and the reason for missing the ride by the user, the Coordinator will follow-up with both parties and determine if the no show is eligible for reimbursement.

Subsidizing Long-Distance Routes

If there is interest from communities who are at a further distance (e.g. Eskasoni) or employers who are located outside of the CBRM (e.g. Baddeck) and they would like to subsidize the cost for users, service providers are open to doing long-distance journeys. However, the rate that the individual user pays must not go higher than $7 / seat; therefore, the additional cost would have to be subsidized by the employer or community partner to make the route financially viable. As above, routes are considered financially viable when they are able to return revenue of $1.15 / km to the service provider.

Operational Projections

Initial Service Provision (May-June 2019)

Within the first one to two months following the launch of the Community Connects service, it is expected that demand for the service will not cause service providers to hire additional drivers. In addition to the time required for marketing activities to generate momentum and reach new potential customers, it will take time to gather enough service requests to build routes that meet the requirement for financial viability. We anticipate, initially, that the Community Connects service will be a small portion of the taxi companies overall service and revenue, a supplement and small addition to the core business of personal taxi service.

Service providers may need to begin to hire new drivers sooner than expected if fewer service providers decide to participate in the Community Connects pilot, and demand for the service and potential revenue is greater for a smaller number of participating providers.

Methods of Service Integration

As demand for the service grows, strategies for integration with existing taxi service will need to evolve as well. Service providers have a variety of strategies they could employ to integrate Community Connects activity with their existing taxi service. For example:

- Drivers could take taxi calls in between Community Connects routes
- Drivers could be assigned to only offer solely Community Connects routes, using the fixed schedule to minimize down-time
- Dispatchers could assign routes to a single driver, or assign routes to drivers based on who is near the pick-up point(s) on a given day

These strategies will likely change as the demand for Community Connects service increases. This flexibility of service integration represents an opportunity for taxi operators to maximize the efficiency of their Community Connects activities, as well as an opportunity to improve the efficiency of their regular taxi service.

Hiring Additional Staff

As more Community Connects routes are created and offered to service providers, the question of when to add additional staff will come up. This will vary depending on which model of integration is chosen by the taxi company above.

Here is an example of a potential scenario:

> Driver A is completing solely Community Connects routes and works a ten hour shift. It is conceivable that a driver could complete eight one-way routes in this time period, depending on how close they are to one another and how many stops are on each route.

> In order that this driver has eight routes, all service providers participating in the Community Connects program would have also been offered at least eight routes, given the plan for equal distribution of opportunities. If all ten taxi operators participate in the model, this would be a total of eighty routes. A route is defined as service in one direction only.

> - 80 routes shared equally among 10 taxi operators
> - If 60% of riders are using the service to get to-and-from work (40% are using the service only one-way), **80 routes would require 200 riders**.[2]

In the example above, 200 people using the service five days per week would result in each taxi operator needing to hire at least one additional driver to meet demand.

Transportation Market Analysis

Community Connects

Community Connects is an alternative that has emerged between the lower cost, less flexible Transit Cape Breton service and the higher cost, more flexible personal taxi service. When Transit Cape Breton runs a comparable route to something offered by Community Connects (e.g. Glace Bay to Sydney during regular business hours) we imagine that users will choose Transit Cape Breton as a lower cost alternative. When travelling within service areas, or if individuals from the same dwelling are going to the same location, we envision personal taxis continuing to be the best choice for users.

Community Connects will not try to duplicate these well established services. Instead, we will try to meet the needs of users who are currently being underserved by these models, such as those who require transportation that is reliable, flexible and affordable on an ongoing basis in order to maintain employment, education, and training in communities other than the one they live in. Throughout the pilot, Community Connects will also gather and share information with Transit Cape Breton and taxi

---

[2] If 60 of the routes contain riders using the service to get to-and-from work: 30 round trip routes x 4 riders per route = 120 riders

This leaves 20 of the routes contain riders using the service only one-way only: 20 one-way routes x 4 riders per route = 80 riders

owners to demonstrate how the service is being used in the pilot, and continue to investigate how more efficient divisions of transportation services and partnership can be explored moving forward.

Marketing the Community Connects Service

Approach for Marketing the Service

The Community Connects service is being initially marketed via four main channels: online presence, in-person community information sessions, partner networks, and media.

Response from Initial Marketing

The general sentiments gathered from the initial target outreach was that there would be a large number of students, especially international students, interested in using the service. This demand is only anticipated to grow as more students continue to arrive. The Mayflower Mall was also felt to be a large potential hub for this service, as the stores there are always hiring, and it is centrally located outside of a few different service areas, making it easier to access. And, lastly, those participating in employment readiness programs, and the organizations that support them to access these programs, will be a large potential customer group.

Risks and Assumptions

Mitigation of Risks

Regulatory Environment

With the approval of this document, and the terms of the service outlined within it, the CBRM Bylaws Department is providing their consent to move forward with the pilot under the current regulatory environment. Throughout the pilot, the Bylaws Department will be provided a monthly update to monitor the service and will be notified of any challenges of operating this service within the existing Bylaw. Their approval will be required for any adaptations to the pilot throughout the testing period to ensure these adaptations continue to fall within the Bylaw.

Engagement with the Taxi Industry

Upon receiving this document, and the final pilot terms of operation outlined within it, each taxi owner will be invited to participate and will make their own determination about whether it makes sense for their business to offer the Community Connects service in addition to their regular taxi service. An additional risk regarding taxi providers is that too few of them will choose to participate in the prototyping phase to successfully offer the Community Connects service. In order for the Community Connects program to work, the model must be proven over the test period to taxi owners, as well as to users, to build up their confidence in the viability of the new system.

Addressing Gaps in Organizational Capacity

Providing a point-to-point transportation service differs from existing transportation services in the region in that the efficient aggregation of rides requires a considerable amount of planning and coordination. Without the effective aggregation of riders, the business model will not be viable for operators and will be ineffective and unreliable for users.

To mitigate this risk, and respond to strong requests from taxi owners, CGS staff have hired two Coordinators to oversee the coordination of the service during regular business hours seven days a week. The Coordinators will work closely with CGS staff and participating providers to ensure that the service is running smoothly and build the network's capacity for offering this type of service. This type of human resource support, however, does make the design of the service for the pilot period less financially self-sustaining and more dependent on external resources to function.

Additional Barriers for Individuals Living in Poverty

While access to reliable and affordable transportation is an essential element to break the cycle of poverty, there are many other factors that prohibit or limit individuals in their struggle to move towards a greater standard of living. As a result of these additional challenges, even with some relief from transportation issues, individuals may still struggle to find success in a work environment, or may make the rational decision to remain on income assistance rather than move to employment.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Due to the critical role that gathering information and feedback plays in the testing period, all Community Connects providers and users will only be allowed to participate in the testing period if they agree to participate in the evaluation.

The components of the evaluation that are required from taxi owners and operators are as follows:

Monthly (Ongoing) Evaluation Methods

- Once a month one-on-one call with the taxi owners participating in Community Connects to determine: how the service is working for them; how their business is doing; whether drivers are satisfied; cost structure for operation; new partnership or customer opportunities; interaction with other cab companies; new drivers and turnover of drivers; new vehicles; volume of requests or service; challenges with the regulatory environment;
- Incidences or challenges with the program;
- Calls from drivers into our feedback line to gather comments, suggestions, complaints, satisfaction about the service on an ongoing basis; promoted with the assistance of taxi owners.

Final Evaluation Methods (Anticipated)

- One-on-one interviews with all Community Connects taxi owners to gather information on their overall experience in the pilot;
- Calls from drivers into our feedback line to gather final comments about the service, promoted with assistance from the taxi owners. .

Financial Analysis

Projected Revenue per Projected Route

Per Kilometer Rate Route Estimates						
Users on Route	Revenue Generated ($)	Route	Route Estimate in km (diameter of most densely populated region in service area plus distance to next service area)	Per km revenue ($/km)	CBRM Taxi Bylaw per km rate for personal taxi fares outside of the service area ($/km)	Difference between CBRM Bylaw rate and projected Community Connects revenue ($/km)
4	28	Glace Bay to Sydney	24.9	1.12	1.15	-0.03
4	28	New Waterford to Sydney	22.9	1.22	1.15	0.07
4	28	New Waterford to Glace Bay	19.9	1.41	1.15	0.26
4	28	North Sydney to Sydney	23.7	1.18	1.15	0.03
4	28	Sydney Mines to Sydney	29.4	0.95	1.15	-0.20
4	28	Sydney Mines to North Sydney	8.4	3.33	1.15	2.18

*See Appendix D for data on variables and route distances.

The above table represents the financial model that the Community Connects service is based upon. As this is a poverty reduction initiative, the intent is to balance the revenue needs of the service providers and their staff with the affordability requirements for the users. Column six (from the left) represents the per km revenue that taxi providers are permitted to collect under the existing Taxi Bylaw for personal taxi trips that travel outside of a service area. It is our aim to try to build Community Connects routes that produce similar per km rates for providers. Relative to a traditional taxi service, customer volume will increase while the cost to each customer will decrease, thereby maintaining per km revenue at the $1.15 rate / km that has been decided by the CBRM Bylaws Department as fair value for customer, driver, and company.

As described above in Section 2, the per km revenue rate for each potential Community Connects route will be monitored as requests come in, which will help the Coordinators know when they can launch a new route. It will also be very important information to collect throughout the pilot to gather data on whether the cost for the service may be too high or too low.

Revenue Distribution

During the pilot phase of the Community Connects service, all revenue generated from the service will go directly to taxi providers. Based upon the $1.15 / km rate for routes, the analysis below is an estimate of revenue distribution per km of use for the service.

Per km Revenue Distribution			
Estimated Per km Revenue	Gas and Vehicle Maintenance (Province of NS 2018 mileage rate based on fuel average and vehicle maintenance)	Driver Commission (50% of net after mileage)	Company Takeaway, including company overhead and profit
1.15	0.4415	0.35425	0.35425

This means that on every Community Connects route, drivers can expect to earn roughly $0.35 / km to cover their time, and companies can expect to earn $0.35 / km to cover overhead and generate profit. This means that on an average route, as determined by the fourth column from the left in the Projected Revenue per Projected Route table, of 21.5 km a driver would earn $7.5 and the taxi company would earn $7.5.
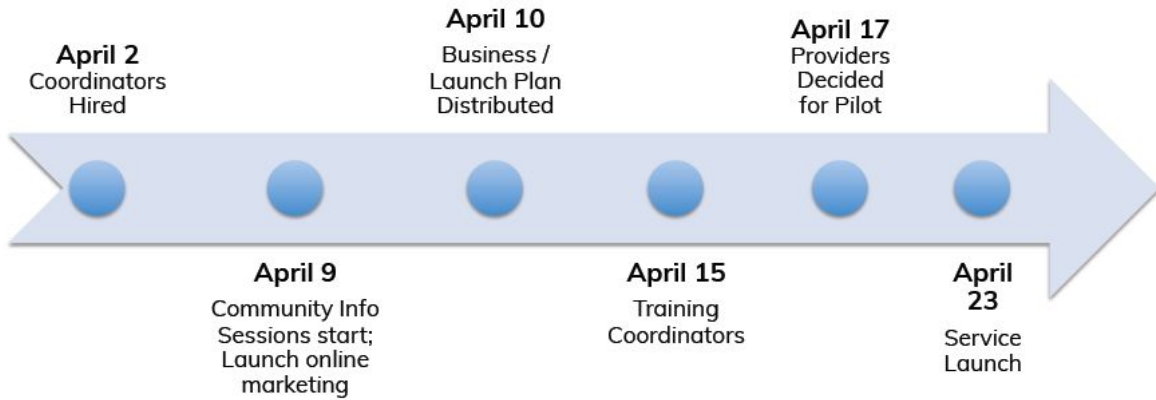
Estimated Cost Overview for Pilot

The table below shows an estimate of the major costs for the pilot broken down by the party responsible for covering the expense. All of the initial launch costs to develop the service and the vast majority of the pilot overhead will be covered by the Province for the pilot period. Taxi companies will be responsible for covering driver and vehicle costs, as well as costs for their own overhead.
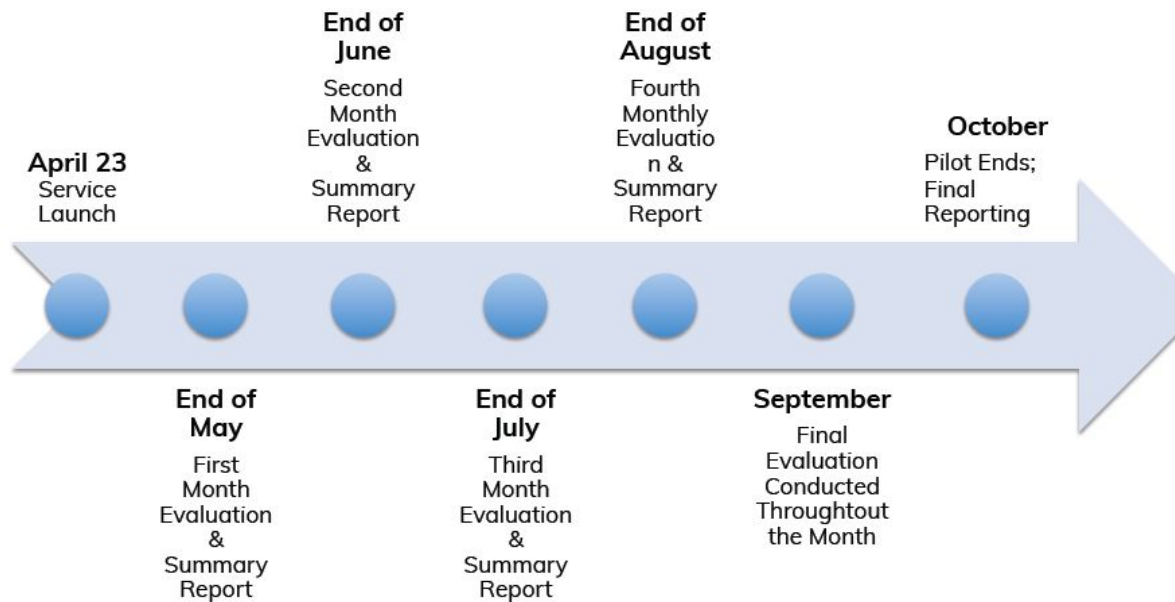
Item	Covered By
Coordinators' Salaries	Province of Nova Scotia
Phone Line	Province of Nova Scotia
Tech Development and Hardware	Province of Nova Scotia
Common Good Solutions' Project Management & Evaluation and Monitoring	Province of Nova Scotia
No Shows	Province of Nova Scotia
Marketing of Service	Province of Nova Scotia
Fuel	Taxi Company
Vehicle Maintenance	Taxi Company
Driver Salary / Commission	Taxi Company
Taxi Company Overhead	Taxi Company

Launch and Pilot Timeline

Launch Plan Timeline

April 2
Coordinators
Hired

April 10
Business /
Launch Plan
Distributed

April 17
Providers
Decided
for Pilot

April 9
Community Info
Sessions start;
Launch online
marketing

April 15
Training
Coordinators

**April
23**
Service
Launch

Community Connects Pilot Timeline

**End of
June**
Second
Month
Evaluation
&
Summary
Report

**End of
August**
Fourth
Monthly
Evaluatio
n &
Summary
Report

October
Pilot Ends;
Final
Reporting

April 23
Service
Launch

**End of
May**
First
Month
Evaluation
&
Summary
Report

**End of
July**
Third
Month
Evaluation
&
Summary
Report

September
Final
Evaluation
Conducted
Throughtout
the Month

Report Body

1. Project Background

Pre-Transportation Innovation Lab

Access to transportation is more than just a means of movement; it can dramatically limit or expand the opportunities available to people based on where they live. For an individual or family living in poverty, access to transportation can mean the difference between accessing jobs, quality food, recreation opportunities, schooling, and healthcare--all core components of upward socioeconomic mobility.

In many regions there is a correlation between higher levels of poverty and limited access to public transportation.[3] The Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) is one such region where levels of poverty are high and access to public transportation is low. Twenty percent of those living in the CBRM are considered low income based on the low-income measure after tax rate (LIM-AT)[4], and the region has an unemployment rate of 17.4%.[5] In a 2011 review of the CBRM's public transportation system, it was also found that the CBRM has the lowest ridership levels of similarly sized municipalities across Canada.[6]

An impending 30% cut of the CBRM's public transportation budget in 2014 motivated community leaders to form the Community Transportation Working Group (CTWG) to kickstart discussion and action towards better community transportation. Out of their two year study, the CTWG identified a number of key areas to address gaps and enhance transportation services in the CBRM. Areas identified as having promise for further investigation emerged from discussions with community stakeholders including employers and public transportation users. In these discussions, employers identified their struggle to fill job vacancies partially due to limitations around transportation, and transportation users commented on the difficulty, or impossibility, of using public transportation to get to and from work.

For a community with such high levels of unemployment and poverty, the ability to fill the gap in transportation services was noted as an area of future interest for its potentially high impact. Two years later, the Transportation Innovation Lab (TIL) was initiated to explore whether an opportunity could emerge from these interrelated challenges.

---

[3] White, 2015. *Stranded: How America's Failing Public Transportation Increases Inequality.* https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/05/stranded-how-americas-failing-public-transportation-increases-inequality/393419/

[4] Statistics Canada, 2018. *Census Profile, 2016 Census, Cape Breton Regional Municipality* http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=1217030&Geo2=PR&Code2=12&Data=Count&SearchText=Cape%20Breton&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=1217030&TABID=1

[5] Ibid.

[6] HDR, 2011. *Cape Breton Regional Municipality Transit System Review: Final Report.* http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/images/stories/Transit/Transit%20System%20Review%20Main%20Report.pdf

Transportation Innovation Lab: Phase 1

The Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) Transportation Innovation Lab (TIL) project was initiated in March 2018. The project was implemented by Common Good Solutions (CGS), guided by a local advisory committee, and overseen by the Department of Community Services under their Poverty Reduction Strategy.

While this project considered the transportation needs of individuals wholistically, its primary focus was to **connect under- and unemployed individuals in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) with employment opportunities across the Island by identifying one or more potential transportation solutions**. The project engaged three main stakeholder groups through the Lab process to: verify needs; generate, evaluate, and test potential solutions; and determine a path to implementation. These three stakeholder groups were: under- and unemployed individuals living in the CBRM, employers looking to fill labour shortages, and community organizations and advocates working in these areas. Throughout the Lab process, staff and council at the CBRM were also frequently engaged.

The TIL's first phase concluded in September 2018, and one solution idea--a point-to-point transportation service--was recommended by the Lab for testing.

Transportation Innovation Lab: Phase 2

In December 2018, the second phase of the TIL was funded by the province. This phase is intended to further co-design and test the point-to-point prototype that was developed in the first phase of the TIL.

The test period for Phase 2 will run from April 2019 until October 2019, offering a six month period of testing and refinement of the model. The primary goal of this phase is to: **Implement and adapt the point-to-point solution idea to test its overall effectiveness at increasing transportation access for workers, and aspiring workers, who earn low incomes in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.**

In addition to the inclusion of TIL's Phase 1 diverse supporters, additional stakeholders are involved in the TIL's Phase 2, such as taxi owners / drivers, the CBRM's Bylaws Department, post-secondary institutions, Membertou First Nation, and the Cape Breton Regional Chamber of Commerce.

At the conclusion of the TIL's Phase 2, all prototyping learnings will be shared with the province, including any recommendations for further support or expansion of this model.

2. Prototyping Service Description

Brand

The point-to-point transportation service will be called **Community Connects**, as the transportation service will be to connect the communities within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM), a municipality whose own slogan is, "a community of communities". The slogan for Community Connects is **Be Driven**, a reference to both the transportation service, but also to the goal of the project to support individuals in their aspirations to access education and join the workforce. The logo is designed to show the transportation focus of the service, and partnership with taxis in the region, with a taxi stripe along the bottom of the logo, as well as a road outline within many of the letters.
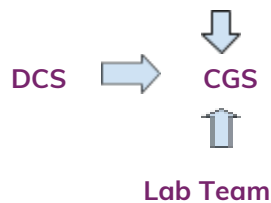
A Community Connects logo (see below), website (mycommunityconnects.ca), and Facebook page (Community Connects) are all being designed for the service in advance of the launch.

Core Team

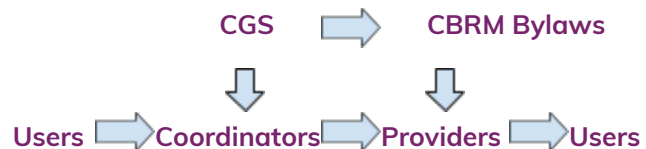### TIL Project Oversight

Local Advisory Committee

⬇

DCS ➡ **CGS**

⬆

Lab Team

Community Connects Prototyping

CGS ➡ **CBRM Bylaws**

⬇   ⬇

Users ➡ **Coordinators** ➡ **Providers** ➡ **Users**

Local Advisory Committee - The TIL Advisory Committee is made up of community, non-profit, and government stakeholders who provide guidance and advice to CGS with project implementation. The Advisory Committee receives weekly updates on the TIL's progress, attends monthly in person meetings, and certain members are called upon to provide expertise on various project matters as they arise.[7]

Department of Community Services - The Department of Community Services is the Province of Nova Scotia's lead department offering guidance on the Transportation Innovation Lab. They offer project oversight on a regular basis, as well as communicate the TIL's work to the different intergovernmental stakeholders working on the Poverty Reduction Initiative.[8]

Lab Team - One of the primary strengths from the TIL's first phase was the multi-stakeholder Lab Team that was created. The Lab Team supporting Phase 2 is made up of first voice users, community organizations, as well as organizations who represent employers. The Lab Team meets once a month to provide general guidance with the prototyping phase and helps to problem solve any issues or adaptations that may arise. Lab Team members who are interested in playing a larger role in the prototyping phase are also called upon to help with stakeholder engagement, public education and data collection.[9]

Common Good Solutions - The TIL project is led by Chloe Donatelli (primary project contact) and Robert Nichols (secondary project contact). Chloe and Robert will be responsible for meeting all project deliverables, and will oversee the planning, implementation and evaluation of the prototyping phase. They will ensure that all project team members, as well as external stakeholders, are made aware of project activity on a regular basis. They will also oversee the hiring, supervision and support for the Community Connects Coordinators.

Community Connects Coordinators - The Community Connects Coordinators will oversee the daily operations and monitoring of the prototype. The Coordinators will handle all inquiries and user requests, build out the routes for the service, and allocate them to providers. The Coordinators will also be responsible for collecting ongoing information about the service over the prototyping period.

Providers - The transportation providers involved in the TIL's prototyping phase are licensed taxi operators in the CBRM. They will be the service delivery agents of the prototyping phase, and, along with the Coordinator, will be the frontline providers of the service, interacting on a daily basis with the users. All ten taxi companies in the CBRM are invited, but not required, to participate as Community

---

[7] The members of the Local Advisory Committee are: Aron Ashton (Nova Scotia Health), Bobby O'Handley (Department of Community Services), Donna Anderson (Department of Community Services), Eric Leviten-Reid (New Dawn), Robyn Lee Seale (Cape Breton Partnership), Shaun Butler (Department of Community Services), Kathleen Yurchesyn (Cape Breton Regional Chamber of Commerce), John Mayich (Cape Breton University), Ashley Osborne (Cape Breton Regional Municipality), David Marshall (Membertou First Nation), Glenn Turner (Nova Scotia Community College.

[8] The primary provincial contacts are Bonnie Ste. Croix, Executive Lead Poverty Reduction, and Genevieve Morrison, Poverty Reduction Coordinator.

[9] The members of the Lab Team are: Karen Furey (YMCA Employment, Eric Leviten-Reid (New Dawn), Robyn Lee Seale (Cape Breton Partnership), Brandon MacDonald (First Voice), Kym MacLeod (First Voice), Donald Wamboldt (First Voice), Renalda Duco (First Voice), Jill Gardiner (United Way), Judy Curnew (First Voice), Barbara Duco (First Voice), Amy McDonald (Department of Community Services), Cassandra Ryan (First Voice), Davy Libbus (First Voice), Troy Penney (Nova Scotia Health), Bethany Eyking (YMCA Employment), Kelly Campbell (DCS), Ian Van Schaick, Sheila Van Schaick.

Connects providers, to participate in the prototype. All taxi owners who participate in the prototype must sign a provider agreement (see Appendix A).

Cape Breton Regional Municipality Bylaws Department - The Cape Breton Regional Municipality acts as the regulatory body for all taxi operators in the CBRM, including those who wish to participate as the Community Connects pilot. The CBRM Bylaws Department is a critical partner in navigating a regulatory environment to support the new prototype.

Users

Community Connects users will be individuals who reside in the CBRM and require transportation to get to work, education and skill-building opportunities. The primary focus for outreach and marketing will target low-income individuals, though proof of income will not be required to qualify for use of the service. Interested users must contact the Coordinator by phone to complete a user intake process (see Appendix B). Users will be explained the terms within the user agreement and their verbal consent will be obtained in order to qualify for the program (see Appendix C). They will receive a copy of this "signed" agreement by mail for their records. All requests for use of the service will be recorded and considered by the Coordinator. However, riders will only be offered transport through the Community Connects pilot once enough ride requests are received in their area to build a viable route.

Core Components of the Community Connects Prototype

Bookings and User Requests

Coordinators

Coordinators have been hired for the test period (April - October, 2019) to manage all user inquiries, user intakes, manage new route requests and bookings, communicate route opportunities to providers, and manage daily record keeping to monitor the service.

Technology Software

The Coordinators will use a technology program to manage bookings and user information. The software is called GetSwift and is currently being modified for Community Connects use by a local Cape Breton delivery company, Click2Order. They will work with us throughout the testing period to refine and adapt the software based on identified needs.

Requests

All new booking requests must go through the Coordinator during their regular office hours, or be recorded as voice messages for the Coordinator to return during regular office hours. While bookings are only received during office hours, the service can run 24 hours a day and 7 days a week to accommodate different transportation demands and schedules, pending sufficient demand to establish viable routes.

Routes

Service Areas

Community Connects is a transportation service that will connect the different communities within the CBRM. A community is defined as one of the five service areas under the existing CBRM Taxi Bylaw. Only ride requests that travel between service areas will be serviced under the Community Connects program.

Building Routes

The Coordinators will manage user requests and will work on clustering the requests to build routes. Once the Coordinators have enough requests on a route to make it financially viable,[10] they will call the route into the provider(s) to see if they are willing to take that route. Shorter distance routes will require less users than longer distance routes to create a financially viable route. Whenever possible, the Coordinator will add additional riders to existing routes to continue to build them out.

Assigning Routes

The Coordinator will assign routes to all providers participating in the Community Connects service. The Coordinator must call in all new route booking requests to providers by the end of the Coordinators' shift the day before the booking request is to occur.

"To-work / school" routes:

5. Determine which service area the route will originate in (based on majority of pick-up locations)
6. Offer the route to one of the service providers in that service area (rotating the order of who is offered routes first)
7. If the first service provider refuses the route, offer the route to the next service provider on the rotating list for that service area
8. If no service providers in the home service area are interested in accepting the route, the Coordinators will go down the list and offer the route to service providers in nearby service areas.

"To-home" routes

6. Determine which service area the route will depart from.
7. Offer the route to one of the service providers in that service area (rotating the order of who is offered routes first).
8. If the first service provider refuses the route, offer the route to the service provider who completed the "to-work" route for these individuals.
9. If the second service provider refuses the route, offer the route to the next service provider on the rotating list for that service area.

---

[10] Viable routes for the Community Connects service will be those that return revenues of approximately $1.15 / km to a transportation provider. This figure is based on the minimum out-of-service-area rate stipulated in the CBRM Taxi Bylaw.

10. If no service providers in the home service area are interested in accepting the route, the Coordinators will go down the list and offer the route to service providers in nearby service areas.

Maintaining Routes

If the route is more than a one-off, once it has been assigned to the provider they will continue to service that route until they no longer wish to do so or the route changes or ends. Providers who have been assigned a route must inform the Coordinator a week in advance if they no longer wish to service that route so another provider can be approached, and, if required, users can be informed the route no longer runs so they can make alternate transportation arrangements. If a provider fails to service a route that has been assigned to them without contacting the Coordinator, the route will automatically be reassigned to another provider, and the Coordinator will follow-up with the provider to determine the reason for the missed route. If a company misses three routes without contacting the Coordinators, they will be informed they no longer are able to participate in the pilot.

Changes to Existing Routes

During the Coordinators' office hours, all changes or cancellations on existing routes will go through the Coordinator. The Coordinator will then contact the providers to inform of the route change. During off-hour times, users will be informed of the dispatch phone numbers of their assigned taxi provider(s) so they can call in their same-evening changes or cancellations to the dispatcher directly. No new route bookings will be handled by the taxi providers; they all must be called into the Coordinator. The Coordinator will call each of the taxi providers, who had off-hour bookings for the previous evening, when they get in on their new shift to confirm and record if any changes were called into their dispatch the previous night from Community Connects users.

If a route goes below the $1.15 / km revenue ratio because of cancellations or changes to the route, the Coordinator will work to try to find an additional rider to fill the seat or to find another route for the users to join, but the route will continue. If the provider decides it is unprofitable at the lower revenue rate to maintain the route, they will have to provide the Coordinator a week's notice so the Coordinator can try to find a different provider to take the booking or provide users enough notice to cancel the route.

Service Rates

Payment for Service

The cost for the Community Connects service will be $7 flat rate / seat. All individual users will be responsible for paying the provider for their seat on each and every trip. If an organizational partner would like to pay for the seat, the Coordinator will inform the taxi provider of this request and the taxi provider will have to handle invoicing the organizational partner for payment for the service.

Payment for No Shows

As a part of the piloting plan, providers have been assured that they will be compensated for any no shows (as defined in Appendix C) during the testing period. If a no show occurs on a route, the provider must contact the Coordinator to inform them of this occurrence. The Coordinator will then contact the user to determine the reason for the no show, remind them of the rules about calling in

cancellations, and inform them of the number of chances they have before they are ineligible for use of the service. At the end of the month, the number of no shows will be tallied and a cheque will be sent to each eligible provider to cover the cost of the no shows they reported. If there are discrepancies in the no shows reported by providers, and the reason for missing the ride by the user, the Coordinator will follow-up with both parties and determine if the no show is eligible for reimbursement.

Subsidizing Long-Distance Routes

If there is interest from communities who are at a further distance (e.g. Eskasoni) or employers who are located outside of the CBRM (e.g. Baddeck) and they would like to subsidize the cost for users, service providers are open to doing long-distance journeys. However, the rate that the individual user pays must not go higher than $7 / seat; therefore, the additional cost would have to be subsidized by the employer or community partner to make the route financially viable. As above, routes are considered financially viable when they are able to return revenue of $1.15 / km to the service provider.

3. Operational Projections

Initial Service Provision (May-June 2019)

Within the first one to two months following the launch of the Community Connects service, it is expected that demand for the service will not cause service providers to hire additional drivers. In addition to the time required for marketing activities to generate momentum and reach new potential customers, it will take time to gather enough service requests to build routes that meet the requirement for financial viability. We anticipate, initially, that the Community Connects service will be a small portion of the taxi companies overall service and revenue, a supplement and small addition to the core business of personal taxi service.

Service providers may need to begin to hire new drivers sooner than expected if fewer service providers decide to participate in the Community Connects pilot, and demand for the service and potential revenue is greater for a smaller number of participating providers.

Methods of Service Integration

As demand for the service grows, strategies for integration with existing taxi service will need to evolve as well. Service providers have a variety of strategies they could employ to integrate Community Connects activity with their existing taxi service. For example:

- Drivers could take taxi calls in between Community Connects routes
- Drivers could be assigned to only offer solely Community Connects routes, using the fixed schedule to minimize down-time
- Dispatchers could assign routes to a single driver, or assign routes to drivers based on who is near the pick-up point(s) on a given day

These strategies will likely change as the demand for Community Connects service increases. This flexibility of service integration represents an opportunity for taxi operators to maximize the efficiency of their Community Connects activities, as well as an opportunity to improve the efficiency of their regular taxi service.

Hiring Additional Staff

As more Community Connects routes are created and offered to service providers, the question of when to add additional staff will come up. This will vary depending on which model of integration is chosen by the taxi company above.

Here is an example of a potential scenario:

Driver A is completing solely Community Connects routes and works a ten hour shift. It is conceivable that a driver could complete eight one-way routes in this time period, depending on how close they are to one another and how many stops are on each route.

In order that this driver has eight routes, all service providers participating in the Community Connects program would have also been offered at least eight routes, given the plan for

equal distribution of opportunities. If all ten taxi operators participate in the model, this would be a total of eighty routes. A route is defined as service in one direction only.

- 80 routes shared equally among 10 taxi operators
- If 60% of riders are using the service to get to-and-from work (40% are using the service only one-way), **80 routes would require 200 riders**.[11]

In the example above, 200 people using the service five days per week would result in each taxi operator needing to hire at least one additional driver to meet demand.

---

[11] If 60 of the routes contain riders using the service to get to-and-from work: 30 round trip routes x 4 riders per route = 120 riders

This leaves 20 of the routes contain riders using the service only one-way only: 20 one-way routes x 4 riders per route = 80 riders

4. Transportation Market Analysis

There are two main methods of transportation in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality for those without access to a personal vehicle, Transit Cape Breton and regular taxis. While both of these services are integral in creating a more robust transportation network in the area, there continue to be gaps in transportation services offered in the area. It is these gaps that the Community Connects program seeks to fill in partnership with existing transportation providers in the region.

Transit Cape Breton

Transit Cape Breton has been managed by the Cape Breton Regional Municipality since amalgamation. The service offers both fixed route transit lines, as well as a Handi-Transit service, a service for individuals with physical disabilities or who are in wheelchairs. Transit Cape Breton services are a vital connector of the communities in the CBRM, as well as a main transportation service for students, particularly international students, attending NSCC and CBU on Grand Lake Road. Transit Cape Breton, however, is limited by the taxation structure that funds the service. The CBRM only taxes residents for transit who live within 2500 feet of a bus route. All other residents are not taxed for the service, and, as a result, cannot have a bus stop in their area under the present taxation structure. In the 2018 year, $1.8 million dollars was generated through the municipal tax structure to support Transit Cape Breton. If the entire municipality was taxed for the service, the service would have approximately $3 million dollars of annual revenue from municipal taxation.[12]

Transit Cape Breton is the most affordable option for individuals without personal vehicles in the CBRM. Regular fares for Transit Cape Breton range from $1.25 - $5.00 / adult rider depending on the number of zones crossed, and $75 for an adult monthly bus pass. However, as identified above, the service is limited in terms of its geographic reach and schedule. Transit Cape Breton currently runs 11 routes that connect, and sometimes travel throughout, the following communities in the CBRM: Sydney, Dominion, Glace Bay, New Aberdeen, Steele's Hill, Sydney Mines, Whitney Pier, New Waterford, Sydney River, and North Sydney.[13] These routes primarily run during the weekdays, with some limited scheduling on evenings and weekends. The bus fleet is older, though provincial investment over the last couple years has helped to purchase some new fleet vehicles; however, vehicle maintenance and breakdowns occur and cause disruptions in service.

Taxis

There are currently ten taxi companies licensed in the CBRM. These companies have approximately 200 vehicles licensed for taxi operation, including cars, minivans, and one company has a vehicle that can accommodate wheelchairs. They also have experienced drivers and staff, approximately 380 licensed taxi drivers in the region, many of whom have been working in the taxi industry for many decades.[14] The taxi companies operate out of five main service areas in the CBRM: Sydney, Glace Bay, New Waterford, Sydney Mines and North Sydney, though can accommodate passenger

---

[12] Data from email correspondence with Councillor Kendra Coombes and Jennifer Campbell, CBRM's Chief Financial Officer.

[13] Transit Cape Breton. Riders' Guide. https://www.cbrm.ns.ca/images/Transit_Guide_-_march_2019.pdf

[14] Data obtained from email correspondence on April 2 with Paul Burt, CBRM's Manager of Bylaws.

requests in any location in the municipality, and even beyond the municipality. In every service area aside from Sydney, there is a $7 flat rate to travel within the service area. In Sydney, the fare is supposed to be metered, though often is more informally set. For individuals requiring transportation within their community, taxis offer a fairly cost effective and very convenient method of getting around, and are widely used by many residents in the CBRM without access to personal vehicle.

For trips outside of the service area, rates are much more costly using personal taxi. The Bylaw states that trips outside of the service area should be approximately $1.15 / km. This translates into personal taxi flat rates between communities that are much more costly than within service area trips, such as New Waterford to Sydney a $20 fare and Glace Bay to Sydney a $25 fare. As a result, personal taxis, while convenient and accessible to all residents of the CBRM, can be cost prohibitive. This is especially true for low income residents who may require out of community transportation on a regular basis.

Taxis are also used by a variety of transportation seekers in the area, and the demand for their services can greatly fluctuate. For example, cruise ship passengers, individuals leaving the bar, income assistance recipients who receive cheques at a certain time each month, all cause spikes in demand and make it more difficult for timely and responsive service for others requiring taxis.

Community Connects

The Community Connects pilot is designed as a mechanism to fill the space between Transit Cape Breton's existing service and personal taxi service. The service will be middle cost for community-to-community transport in the CBRM: more expensive than Transit Cape Breton but less expensive than personal taxi. It will also be middle-of-the-road in terms of convenience and geographic scope. It will have more capacity to respond to demand in various geographic regions than the fixed route Transit Cape Breton lines, but less than a personal taxi request. It also will require greater coordination and flexibility from the rider than a personal taxi ride, but should be more convenient than most of Transit Cape Breton's longer distance routes.

Community Connects is an alternative that has emerged between the lower cost, less flexible Transit Cape Breton service and the higher cost, more flexible personal taxi service. When Transit Cape Breton runs a comparable route to something offered by Community Connects (e.g. Glace Bay to Sydney during regular business hours) we imagine that users will choose Transit Cape Breton as a lower cost alternative. When travelling within service areas, or if individuals from the same dwelling are going to the same location, we envision personal taxis continuing to be the best choice for users.

Community Connects will not try to duplicate these well established services. Instead, we will try to meet the needs of users who are currently being underserved by these models, such as those who require transportation that is reliable, flexible and affordable on an ongoing basis in order to maintain employment, education, and training in communities other than the one they live in. Throughout the pilot, Community Connects will also gather and share information with Transit Cape Breton and taxi owners to demonstrate how the service is being used in the pilot, and continue to investigate how more efficient divisions of transportation services and partnership can be explored moving forward.

5. Marketing the Community Connects Service

Approach for Marketing the Service

The Community Connects service is being initially marketed via four main channels: online presence, in-person community information sessions, partner networks, and media.

Online Presence

Community Connects online presence includes a website (mycommunityconnects.ca) and Facebook page (Community Connects). Both of these are still in development and will be launched to correspond with the in person community outreach sessions. The website will be available to offer basic information and contact details about the service, and the Facebook page will allow for Community Connects users to correspond with each other and the Coordinators.

In Person Community Information Sessions

In-person community information sessions are being held in five areas throughout the CBRM: Grand Lake Road (Mayflower Mall), New Waterford (Knights of Columbus Hall), Glace Bay (YMCA), Sydney (Crossroads Cape Breton), Sydney Mines (Community Cares Youth Outreach). These sessions will be co-hosted with CGS staff, the Community Connects Coordinators, and First Voice Lab Team participants. Many of our hosting partners for these sessions have also offered to promote the sessions through their own networks (e.g. the Manager of the Mayflower Mall has shared the information with the mall's 88 store managers). These sessions will provide partners and potential users the opportunity to hear more about the project, with some background about the TIL, as well as information on the Community Connects service. Information flyers will be handed out to all attendees at the community information sessions so that they can distribute this information within their own networks.

Partner Networks

In addition to online marketing and in-person community outreach, we have relied heavily on the networks that were already established in the TIL process to help us spread the word. Seventy TIL contacts and supporters were reached out to with information about the pilot service's launch. These included: Nova Scotia Works, Crossroads Cape Breton, YREACH - YMCA Centre for Immigrant Program, Cape Breton Regional Hospital, Eskasoni Employment Training Department, Cape Breton Centre for Immigration, Northside Economic Development Association, New Waterford Resource Centre, Parkland Retirement Home, Nova Scotia Community College, Bay It Forward, Cape Breton Community Housing, Townhouse, Adult Learning Association of Cape Breton, United Way, YMCA, Community Cares Youth Outreach, S2G Call Centre, Cape Breton University, Cape Breton Victoria Centre for Education, and Cape Breton Regional Municipality Mayor and Council.

Of this initial partner outreach, the following groups responded saying they wanted more information so that they could assist in sharing with their own networks:

- Mayflower Mall - 88 stores and 1000 employees;
- YMCA Employment Centres - 5 locations throughout the CBRM;

- Department of Community Services;
- United Way;
- Nova Scotia Works Employment Centres - they shared on their Twitter account which led to the Cape Breton Post reaching out;
- Cape Breton Centre for Immigration - they have an existing email list serve of 846 students and there will be an additional 600 new international students arriving in May;
- Adult Learning Association of Cape Breton - all of their staff sat in on a session about the service. They operate programs in New Waterford, Glace Bay, Sydney and Sydney Mines with roughly 75 current students;
- Nova Scotia Health Authority;
- Councillor Amanda MacDougall;

Media

Community Connects has been fortunate to receive some positive media attention. CBC Cape Breton ran a radio story about the community information sessions and launch of the service, and the Cape Breton Post and The Coast Radio have also reached out requesting an interview.

Response from Initial Marketing

While a great deal of marketing and target outreach remains to be completed in the next couple of weeks, throughout the initial marketing period, Common Good Solutions' staff have heard positive sentiments expressed from employers, partners and potential users about the service's launch. People are excited for the service to allow them to maintain employment and retain employees. An employer in Glace Bay spoke to the fact that they have only been able to hire within their community as it is too hard for people to afford to travel from other areas in the CBRM. They felt that having access to this service will allow them to widen their hiring reach. Some employers also spoke about the potential to consider subsidizing the seats further for employees to help cover the cost of travel with an affordable option like Community Connects. Support organizations have said this service will be very helpful to accommodate large group trainings that they run.

Some concerns expressed in response to the initial marketing and outreach are around the cost of the seat per user, and whether those who live in the rural parts of each community will not be able to be placed on a route. Overall, the sentiment was that this service would offer a critical stepping stone to allow individuals to overcome barriers around attaching to employment. Once people have worked enough hours or earned enough income, then they may be more able to afford multiple forms of transportation to meet their needs, thereby increasing their options.

The general sentiments gathered from the initial target outreach was that there would be a large number of students, especially international students, interested in using the service. This demand is only anticipated to grow as more students continue to arrive. The Mayflower Mall was also felt to be a large potential hub for this service, as the stores there are always hiring, and it is centrally located outside of a few different service areas, making it easier to access. And, lastly, those participating in employment readiness programs, and the organizations that support them to access these programs, will be a large potential customer group.

6. Risks and Assumptions

Mitigation of Risks

Regulatory Environment

As with most innovations, the Community Connects concept is new for the CBRM. As a result, there is some uncertainty around how this activity will fit in the existing legislative context and whether the legislative context may have to be changed in order to support this activity in the long term.

The topic of municipal regulation in relation to the pilot has been explored in great detail since July 2018, and frequent contact with the CBRM's Bylaws Department will be maintained throughout the entire testing period. With the approval of this document, and the terms of the service outlined within it, the CBRM Bylaws Department is providing their consent to move forward with the pilot under the current regulatory environment. Throughout the pilot, the Bylaws Department will be provided a monthly update to monitor the service and will be notified of any challenges of operating this service within the existing Bylaw. Their approval will be required for any adaptations to the pilot throughout the testing period to ensure these adaptations continue to fall within the Bylaw.

Engagement with the Taxi Industry

The taxi industry in the CBRM currently serves many low income residents. Their services are paid for by individuals, sometimes through partner organizations and government arrangements. All taxi owners will be welcomed to become a Community Connects service provider, offering an opportunity to continue to serve the same customers--and additional customers who could otherwise not afford to pay--by incorporating a different model. Upon receiving this document, and the final pilot terms of operation outlined within it, each taxi owner will be invited to participate and will make their own determination about whether it makes sense for their business to offer the Community Connects service in addition to their regular taxi service. An additional risk regarding taxi providers is that too few of them will choose to participate in the prototyping phase to successfully offer the Community Connects service. In order for the Community Connects program to work, the model must be proven over the test period to taxi owners, as well as to users, to build up their confidence in the viability of the new system.

Addressing Gaps in Organizational Capacity

Providing a point-to-point transportation service differs from existing transportation services in the region in that the efficient aggregation of rides requires a considerable amount of planning and coordination. Without the effective aggregation of riders, the business model will not be viable for operators and will be ineffective and unreliable for users. If these gaps in organizational capacity are left unaddressed they run the risk in undermining the potential of the service.

To mitigate this risk, and respond to strong requests from taxi owners, CGS staff have hired two Coordinators to oversee the coordination of the service during regular business hours seven days a week. The Coordinators will work closely with CGS staff and participating providers to ensure that the service is running smoothly and build the network's capacity for offering this type of service. This

type of human resource support, however, does make the design of the service for the pilot period less financially self-sustaining and more dependent on external resources to function.

Additional Barriers for Individuals Living in Poverty

While access to reliable and affordable transportation is an essential element to break the cycle of poverty, there are many other factors that prohibit or limit individuals in their struggle to move towards a greater standard of living. As a result of these additional challenges, even with some relief from transportation issues, individuals may still struggle to find success in a work environment, or may make the rational decision to remain on income assistance rather than move to employment.

We anticipate that during the monitoring and evaluation of the service we will hear about barriers that still exist for low income individuals as they transition to employment. For example, our Coordinators will be receiving calls when someone has to cancel their ride for work or school because of other life stresses, or may hear about other life barriers when doing an intake process with a potential user. We intend to collect this critical data and communicate it to relevant stakeholders, such as the Department of Community Services, so that they may consider how better to support individuals (re)entering the workforce. Over the course of the project, we also have built a large network of poverty reduction contacts, so, whenever possible, the Coordinators will seek to connect individuals in with supports that are available to help overcome the barriers they may be facing.

Project Assumptions

The TIL's prototyping phase is based on the following assumptions:
- Taxi owners will be interested in participating as Community Connects providers.
- With the right coordination and support, it will be possible to aggregate rides to make the Community Connects service affordable for users and financially sustainable for providers.
- There are enough individuals earning low incomes, without adequate transportation access, and interested in employment and skill-building opportunities to sustain the Community Connects service in the CBRM at a profitable service level.
- The $1.15 / km rate set by the CBRM Bylaws Department for personal taxi fare outside of service areas is a fair and sustainable rate for taxi drivers and companies.
- Community Connects service providers will be able to offer a service that provides reliable, accessible, affordable transportation that eligible clients will want to use.
- The CBRM staff and Council are willing to meaningfully partner with the TIL to ensure the testing period is able to be carried out without interruption and with support from the local municipality.
- Taxi owners and operators who choose not to participate in the Community Connects service will respectfully allow others providers to participate.
- The service that is built during the pilot period, if successful, will be maintained and supported following the pilot, either through greater efficiency and sustainability in the model, opportunities for further partnership, and / or continued investment from provincial partners.
- The Community Connects service is a supplementary and unique service that will not negatively impact Transit Cape Breton and the personal taxi industry in the CBRM.

7. Evaluation and Monitoring

Due to the critical role that gathering information and feedback plays in the testing period, all Community Connects providers and users will only be allowed to participate in the testing period if they agree to participate in the evaluation. This information is required by CGS and the Coordinators to understand how to adapt the service over the test period, by the province to understand the effectiveness of the service they are supporting, and the CBRM's Bylaws Department to ensure that the service is being used for its intended purpose.

Formative (Ongoing) Evaluation

The Coordinator role will be essential to ensuring that the correct monitoring data is being collected throughout the pilot period. This is the formative or ongoing evaluation. The Coordinators will be the on-the-ground, frontline contact for users of the Community Connects service and will be the only ones interacting on a daily basis with users and service providers. To assist the Coordinators in their collection of ongoing information, a technology solution is being developed. It is a modified version of GetSwift, which will help the Coordinators store information, such as user profiles, route requests, and viable routes. This software has the ability to generate reports that will help us aggregate ongoing data to create summaries of day-to-day activity. Whatever information the technology software is not able to capture, our Coordinators will record manually. A summary of the formative evaluation information will be generated each month and provided to various stakeholders and core team members, such as: the CBRM's Bylaws Department, Department of Community Services, Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, Transit Cape Breton, the Local Advisory Committee, the Lab Team, taxi owners participating in Community Connects, etc.

Formative Evaluation Methods

- GetSwift Reports:

    - User profiles - with intake information (see Appendix B);
    - Information on ride requests - number, location, time, frequency;
    - Information on routes built - Number of users, pick up locations, drop off locations, time period for route, providers contacted to see if they would be willing to take the route, providers who accepted the route; number of return routes serviced by the same company or a different company;
    - The linking of user profile data to route data (e.g. the number of users requesting routes or assigned to routes who are using the service to get to work vs. to school; the number of users assigned to a route who were not working previously).

- Coordinators' Collected Information:

    - The total number of information inquiries received;
    - The number of times contacted by existing users to change or cancel a booking;
    - Once a month one-on-one call with the taxi owners participating in Community Connects to determine: how the service is working for them; how their business is doing; whether drivers are satisfied; cost structure for operation; new partnership or customer opportunities; interaction with other cab companies; new drivers and turnover of drivers; new vehicles; volume of requests or service; challenges with the regulatory environment;
    - Revenue per km on all routes;
    - Per-provider revenue for successful routes (not including no show revenue);

- Number of no shows and cost to the program;
- Incidences or challenges with the program;
- Average number of interactions per booking with users and with providers;
- Monthly e-survey sent to various project stakeholders to gather their feedback on the service and collect feedback they may have gathered from users or providers (e.g. institutional, government or employer partners, CBRM Bylaws, Municipal Councillors);
- Any adaptations to the program - date adaptation was implemented; type of adaptation; reason for adaptation

- Feedback Call-in Line:

    - The number and nature of calls, texts, or emails received on the feedback line to gather comments, suggestions, complaints, satisfaction of users, drivers, partners, etc. about the service on an ongoing basis.

Summative (Final) Evaluation

In addition to ongoing formative evaluation, CGS will also look to complete a summative (final) evaluation at the end of the evaluation period. The data from this summative evaluation will be gathered in the month of September. This evaluation will include qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc. to understand how the testing period felt for participants and providers and what kind of impact they observed this service having on their lives. This summative evaluation will be done with the main stakeholders of Community Connects, such as: the CBRM, transportation users, employers, organizations, providers. Guided by CGS, the Coordinators and Lab Team members will play a central role in the collection of information for the final evaluation. The evaluation techniques used during the final evaluation will be refined through the ongoing project evaluation process. Some initial thoughts on evaluation techniques that will be used to gather final evaluation data are below.

Summative Evaluation Methods (Anticipated)
- One-on-one interviews with all Community Connects taxi owners to gather information on their overall experience in the pilot;
- Large advertising push regarding the feedback call in line - to have users, drivers, partners, call in to provide final and overall feedback on the pilot period;
- Phone interviews and online surveys for users - including those booked on routes, those who put in requests and never got booked on a route, those who stopped using the service, etc.;
- Online survey for partners (institutional, government, community, and employer partners) - to gather feedback from their own perspective as to the spin off impacts from the pilots (e.g. decrease in costs, increase in efficiency, decrease in staff time spent on HR or transportation-related matters, stronger attendance and maintenance of students and workers, etc.);
- Focus group with Lab Team to determine the impact on them, and their work, if applicable, on being a part of the pilot and discussion on next steps for the program;
- Focus group with Local Advisory Committee to determine the impact on them, and their work, on being a part of the pilot and discussion of next steps for the program;

- Aggregated and cross-referenced data from Getswift and Coordinator reports - as described above in the formative methods section;
- One-on-one interviews with Community Connects Coordinators to determine the impact on them of being a part of the pilot, and their overall feedback about the effectiveness of the pilot, remaining challenges with the program, and recommendations for next steps

8. Financial Analysis

Projected Revenue per Projected Route

Per Kilometer Rate Route Estimates

Users on Route	Revenue Generated ($)	Route	Route Estimate in km (diameter of most densely populated region in service area plus distance to next service area)	Per km revenue ($/km)	CBRM Taxi Bylaw per km rate for personal taxi fares outside of the service area ($/km)	Difference between CBRM Bylaw rate and projected Community Connects revenue ($/km)
4	28	Glace Bay to Sydney	24.9	1.12	1.15	-0.03
4	28	New Waterford to Sydney	22.9	1.22	1.15	0.07
4	28	New Waterford to Glace Bay	19.9	1.41	1.15	0.26
4	28	North Sydney to Sydney	23.7	1.18	1.15	0.03
4	28	Sydney Mines to Sydney	29.4	0.95	1.15	-0.20
4	28	Sydney Mines to North Sydney	8.4	3.33	1.15	2.18

*See Appendix D for data on variables and route distances.

The above table represents the financial model that the Community Connects service is based upon. As this is a poverty reduction initiative, the intent is to balance the revenue needs of the service providers and their staff with the affordability requirements for the users. Column six (from the left) represents the per km revenue that taxi providers are permitted to collect under the existing Taxi Bylaw for personal taxi trips that travel outside of a service area. It is our aim to try to build Community Connects routes that produce similar per km rates for providers. Relative to a traditional taxi service, customer volume will increase while the cost to each customer will decrease, thereby maintaining per km revenue at the $1.15 rate / km that has been decided by the CBRM Bylaws Department as fair value for customer, driver, and company.

As described above in Section 2, the per km revenue rate for each potential Community Connects route will be monitored as requests come in, which will help the Coordinators know when they can launch a new route. It will also be very important information to collect throughout the pilot to gather data on whether the cost for the service may be too high or too low.

Revenue Distribution

During the pilot phase of the Community Connects service, all revenue generated from the service will go directly to taxi providers. Based upon the $1.15 / km rate for routes, the analysis below is an estimate of revenue distribution per km of use for the service.

Per km Revenue Distribution			
Estimated Per km Revenue	Gas and Vehicle Maintenance (Province of NS 2018 mileage rate based on fuel average and vehicle maintenance)	Driver Commission (50% of net after mileage)	Company Takeaway, including company overhead and profit
1.15	0.4415	0.35425	0.35425

This means that on every Community Connects route, drivers can expect to earn roughly $0.35 / km to cover their time, and companies can expect to earn $0.35 / km to cover overhead and generate profit. This means that on an average route, as determined by the fourth column from the left in the Projected Revenue per Projected Route table, of 21.5 km a driver would earn $7.5 and the taxi company would earn $7.5.
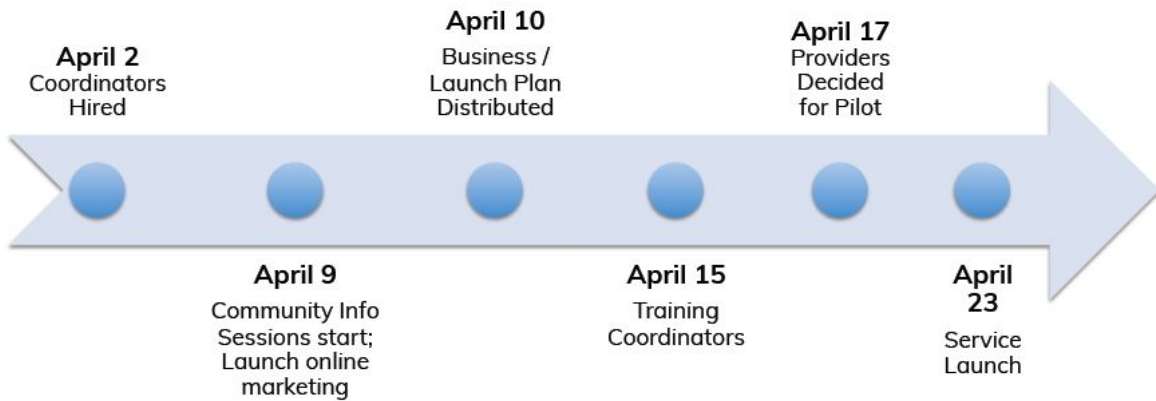
Estimated Cost Overview for Pilot

The table below shows an estimate of the major costs for the pilot broken down by the party responsible for covering the expense. All of the initial launch costs to develop the service and the vast majority of the pilot overhead will be covered by the Province for the pilot period. Taxi companies will be responsible for covering driver and vehicle costs, as well as costs for their own overhead.

Item	Covered By
Coordinators' Salaries	Province of Nova Scotia
Phone Line	Province of Nova Scotia
Tech Development and Hardware	Province of Nova Scotia
Common Good Solutions' Project Management & Evaluation and Monitoring	Province of Nova Scotia
No Shows	Province of Nova Scotia
Marketing of Service	Province of Nova Scotia
Fuel	Taxi Company
Vehicle Maintenance	Taxi Company
Driver Salary / Commission	Taxi Company
Taxi Company Overhead	Taxi Company

9. Launch and Pilot Timeline

Launch Plan Timeline

April 2
Coordinators Hired

April 10
Business /
Launch Plan
Distributed

April 17
Providers
Decided
for Pilot

April 9
Community Info
Sessions start;
Launch online
marketing

April 15
Training
Coordinators

April 23
Service
Launch

Community Connects Pilot Timeline

April 23
Service
Launch

End of June
Second
Month
Evaluation
&
Summary
Report

End of August
Fourth
Monthly
Evaluatio
n &
Summary
Report

October
Pilot Ends;
Final
Reporting

End of May
First
Month
Evaluation
&
Summary
Report

End of July
Third
Month
Evaluation
&
Summary
Report

September
Final
Evaluation
Conducted
Throughtout
the Month

Appendices

Appendix A: Provider Agreement

Provider Agreement

As a provider of the Community Connects program I agree to the following terms of service:

1) Contact the Coordinator at least one week in advance if you do not want to continue servicing an ongoing route that has been assigned to your company.
2) Contact the Coordinator if your drivers can no longer service a route at least one week in advance of the change. If a participating company does not show up for an assigned route three times and has not contacted the Coordinator, they may be ineligible to continue.
3) Report all no shows to the Coordinator within one business day of the no show occurring so the Coordinator can follow-up in a timely manner to determine cause. If a no show is not reported within one business day of its occurrence, it may be ineligible for reimbursement.
4) Respond to all Coordinator communication and inquiries within 24 hours.
5) Treat other taxi companies, passengers and staff working on the Community Connects pilot with courtesy and respect. If complaints are called in on a provider, the Coordinator will follow-up to investigate the complaint and inform the CBRM's Bylaws Department. The Coordinator reserves the right to disqualify service providers from participating in the pilot if they are found to be acting inappropriately.
6) Manage last minute changes in scheduling that will be called into the providers' dispatch service during the Coordinators off hour times. Report these changes to the Coordinator.
7) Provide relevant information to the Community Connects Coordinator and Common Good Solutions' staff during a monthly one-on-one phone call to monitor the pilot and its impacts and agree to an end of pilot final interview to gather your final opinions.
8) Handle all payments for your services under the Community Connects program. Individual users will pay on an ongoing basis to drivers; institutional users may want to pay for large groups of users either through invoicing or via credit card.
9) Abide by all rules and regulations within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality's Taxi Bylaw.
10) Remain open to incorporating changes and adaptations to the service.

I have read, understand and consent to the above agreements outlined above to act as a provider for the Community Connects service.

_____   _____

Owners Name   Date

_____

Owners Signature

Appendix B: User Intake Process

1. What is your full name?
2. What is the best way to reach you (phone, email, text)?
3. What is your address?
4. Where do you need to go with the Community Connects service (work, school)?
5. What is your position (if work)?
6. What is your required schedule for transportation?
    a. Does this change or always stay the same?
7. Do you have any requirements about the type of vehicle that picks you up or any mobility issues?
8. Do you have additional transportation requirements that limit your ability to participate in school or work?
9. Do you know of any individuals who may need to travel to work or school at the same time as you that may be interested in getting in on the Community Connects route?
    a. If yes, could you follow-up with these individuals and encourage them to call the Coordinator?
10. Were you working or in school previously?
    a. If no, why not?
    b. If yes, how were you getting to work or school?
    c. How much were you spending on daily transportation to get to work or school?
    d. How long did it take you to get there each day?
    e. On a scale of 1 - 4, with 1 being very unreliable and 4 being very reliable, how reliable was your transportation?
11. Read through the User Agreement Form - explaining each point in detail.
    a. Do you have any questions?
    b. Do you consent?
    c. A copy of the user contract will be mailed to them.

Appendix C: User Contract

User Agreement

As a user of the Community Connects program I agree to the following terms of service:

1) Contact the Coordinator at least 24 hours in advance with booking requests, or as soon as I know my schedule, so it is more likely to find a route for my request.
2) Contact the Coordinator, or my taxi provider in off hour times, as soon as I know about any changes to my booked route. The request for the change in schedule may or may not be able to be accommodated.
3) Contact the Coordinator, or my taxi provider in off hour times, at least one hour in advance to cancel a booking.
4) If you do not cancel a booking and do not show up for your pick up, this constitutes as a "no show". After three "no shows" a user will not be allowed to continue to use the service.
5) The Community Connects program is based on the sharing of rides with other users, so, being on time is very important to ensure the reliability of the service for all. Drivers will wait five additional minutes at your pick up location following your scheduled booking time. If you don't come out during that time period, they will leave and that ride will be counted as a "no show".
6) Treat all drivers, staff and passengers with respect. If verbal or physical abuse is reported by staff, passengers or drivers, the user will be ineligible for continued use of the service.
7) Unless your seat is covered by an organizational partner, all users are responsible for paying the driver the $7 fare for their seat each and every ride.
8) As the Community Connects program is still in its testing phase, collecting information about the model is very important so we can continue to design the service. Users must be willing to share their comments and feedback on the service, and allow for the collection of information about your use of the service. Users will provide comments and suggestions on our ongoing call-in feedback line, and participate in a final phone interview or survey in September.
9) The Community Connects program is only guaranteed to run for the test period (April 2019 - October 2019). Other transportation plans should be made following September in the event that there is a gap in service delivery or the service ends after the test period.

I have read, understand and consent to the above agreements outlined above to use the Community Connects service.

_____   _____

User Name   Date

☐ User Provides Verbal Consent   _____

                                                 Staff who spoke with them

Appendix D: Variables and Route Distances for Financial Analysis

Variables	
User	1
Cost per User	7

Community diameter	km
Glace Bay	4.7
New Waterford	3.6
Sydney	6.3
North Sydney	2.1
Sydney Mines	2.7
*Represents most likely km required for pick ups	

Projected Distances Between Service Areas	km
Glace Bay - Sydney	20.2
New Waterford - Sydney	19.3
New Waterford - Glace Bay	16.3
North Sydney - Sydney	21.6
Sydney Mines - Sydney	26.7
Sydney Mines - North Sydney	5.7