

# Future Governance Options

The City of Grand Island is the new manager of public transportation within the urbanized area of Grand Island. Prior to 2016, Hall County was the manager of public transit services. In the future, it is recommended to begin discussions of a formal governance structure, which incorporates representatives from each of the governmental entities in the region. This governance should be considered for several reasons:

- To establish fair and acceptable cost-sharing arrangements among all entities
- To fund the service through administration of a dedicated funding source
- To ensure that any service changes contemplated in the future are in the best interests of the region and are fair and acceptable to each entity involved
- To establish a long-term commitment for the provision of transit service among all entities

The creation of a multiple entity Regional Authority changes the existing structure and presents an opportunity for a sizable expansion of the service area, if adjacent entities join the Authority. The formation of an Authority allows the regional governance of planning, funding, and operations all under one entity, making it more efficient to provide transit service beyond the city limits of Grand Island.

The existing state law does not permit the City of Grand Island, nor Hall County to form an authority at this time. In 1972, the Nebraska State Legislature passed Legislative Bill 1275 "enabling" the creation of the Transit Authority, City of Omaha, a governmental subdivision of the State of Nebraska, pursuant to statute 14-1803, and the only such transit authority in the state. No other Authority is allowed outside the City of Omaha without the change of this legislative bill. This study recommends the City continue discussions with Hall County and surrounding counties and cities to determine interest in changing existing state law for authorization in the development of an Authority.

# Implementation Plan

	2018	2019
<b>Initial Implementation Steps</b>		
1	Research Rideshare software program options and develop RFP for purchasing the Rideshare software for implementation.	
2	Implement Rideshare software and coordinate with software developer staff to design software infrastructure relative to local and regional needs.	
3	Coordinate with Enterprise Vanpool program representative and establishments such as JBS and Veterans Home.	
4	Finalize contract with vendor and rollout of Enterprise Vanpool program.	
5	Develop general marketing plan for community outreach and awareness for transit services.	
6	Continue coordination with NDOT on the Intercity Bus Service Plan.	
7	Coordinate with NDOT to develop RFP for Intercity Bus Service Operations Plan and Park and Ride Study.	
8	Coordinate with local agencies and establishments to fund the local match for the vehicles and other capital improvements for Intercity Bus Service.	
9	Develop Bid for service contract of transit operations.	
10	Develop RFP for transit facility preliminary planning.	

The implementation plan includes specific projects identified within the study to continue the momentum of enhancing public transit in the Grand Island region. In the next two years, transit projects are planned, which will set the stage for the next phases of enhanced public transit service in the community.

Grand Island Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (GIAMPO)  
 100 East First Street, Box 1968  
 Grand Island, NE 68802  
 308.389.0273  
 www.grand-island.com/GIAMPO

## Getting to the Route of It

THE ROLE OF GOVERNANCE IN REGIONAL TRANSIT



October 16, 2017

## Study Background

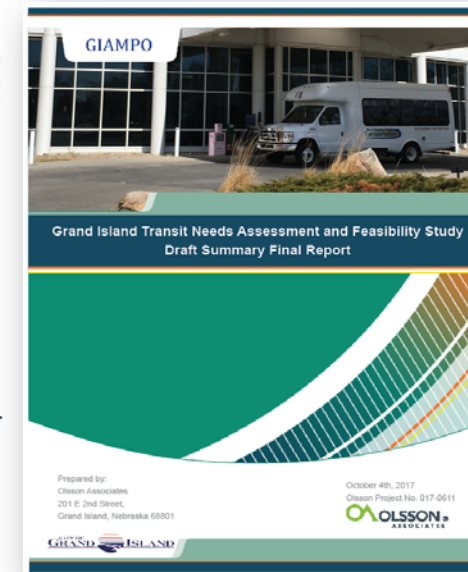
Grand Island and Hall County have had public transportation services available to residents since the mid-1970s. After the 2010 Census designation of Grand Island to an urban area, the City of Grand Island became the primary provider for public transportation within the urbanized area, with Hall County responsible for the rural areas within the County. The City began managing transit service in July 2016. The City currently contracts with Senior Citizens Industries, Inc.(SCI) d/b/a Hall County Public Transportation to operate transit services within the urbanized area. SCI also provides transit service in the rural area with funding from Hall County.

The primary purpose of this study is to provide baseline information to the City of Grand Island, as the City's first year managing the transit service, and to give the City a plan for transit service based upon, but not limited to, community input and vision for the future.

The study identifies future transit opportunities, challenges, and overall transit demand for public transportation in Grand Island and Hall County.



# Final Report



The project included a multi-level data collection effort, evaluation of current conditions and operational structures, a review of peer communities, and the development of future transit alternatives. Based on technical analysis, public and stakeholder involvement, enhanced transit improvements are recommended. The study approach concluded with a 5-Year Fiscally Constrained Plan and a 5-Year Illustrative Plan for the urbanized area. An Implementation Plan with steps for the next two years is also included in the study.

# Transit Vision

*Efficient Mobility for All Residents in the Grand Island Region*



In March 2017, the Grand Island Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (GIAMPO) retained Olsson Associates, and worked closely with stakeholders from around the community to develop future transit alternatives and develop this plan.

The Summary Final Report includes a review of existing transit operations in the study area, identifies the areas in Grand Island with the greatest transit need, presents future transit options, and provides a realistic plan moving forward for the City of Grand Island. The study provides a roadmap for the City to follow to meet the future vision of transit for the Grand Island community.

Multiple opportunities were provided for public engagement and activity participation throughout the study process.

## Public Engagement



Many opportunities for public engagement were available throughout the study, including:

- Public Open Houses
- Focus Group meetings
- Major employer meetings
- Online community survey
- Social media outreach
- Transit rider survey
- Local Project Team meetings
- Transit provider interviews



## Future Alternatives Development

Future transit alternatives were developed and shaped by the vision and goals articulated early in the process, historical ridership and boarding/de-boarding data, transit need, gaps, evaluation of transit delivery in peer cities, input from the community, key stakeholders, rider and community surveys, and consideration of potential services within the community.

Four primary alternatives were developed for the Grand Island and Hall County Region.

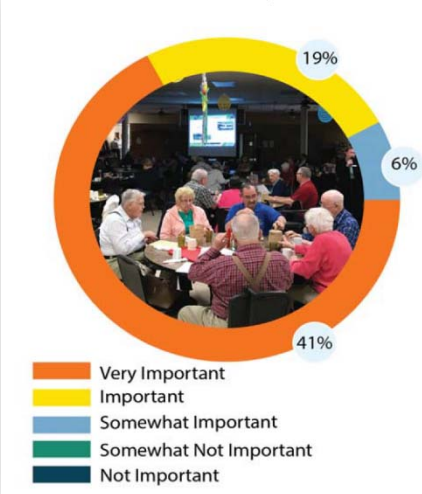
1. Status Quo
2. Same-day Demand Response
3. Flexible Route Service
4. Fixed Route Service

Five additional services were also examined for their potential application for area residents and employees.

5. Regional Airport Service
6. Commuter Express Routes
7. Rideshare Program
8. Vanpool Program
9. Autonomous Vehicle Technology

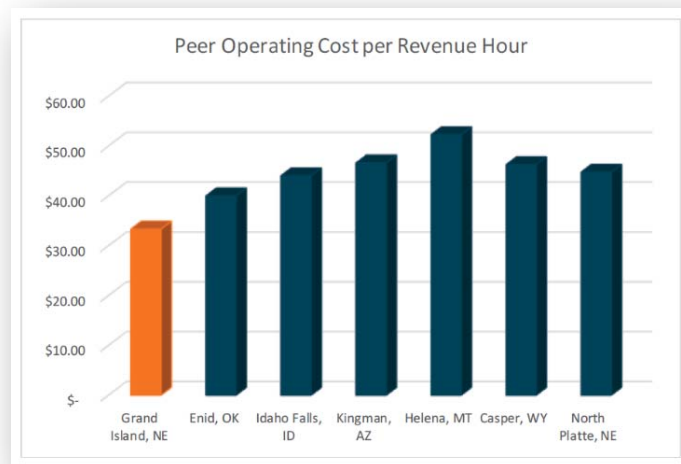
During Round Two Focus Groups, a representative from the NDOT suggested revisiting the Commuter Express Route as an Intercity Bus Route and provide transit service outside typical commute hours. The study team updated the service option to two Intercity Bus Routes, to/from Grand Island, Kearney, and Hastings.

Figure 7.2: Importance of Transit Tomorrow



## Transit Agency - Peer Review

The study included a Transit Agency Peer Review, which provides a useful tool in terms of lessons learned at other agencies and in assessing where Hall County Public Transportation is today, compared to peer communities, using transit industry typical statistics for reasonable costs, ridership, and service levels. The peer agencies included: Enid, OK; Idaho Falls, ID; Kingman, AZ; Helena, MT; Casper, WY; and North Platte, NE.



## Fiscally Constrained Plan

The Fiscally Constrained Plan is based upon technical data analysis, the public engagement process for this study, and the realistic financial projections for the City for the next five years. Due to the limited resources of the City's general fund, there is very little flexibility with the budget for the City, which is reflected in the Fiscally Constrained Plan with the recommendation for remaining Status Quo, 24-hour demand response service, which is what is provided today.

Even though limited funding is projected to continue for the next five years, there are planning projects to begin immediately that require little or no funding increases over the existing budget, as shown on the right.

New transit services in the next five years include coordination with the Nebraska Department of Transportation for Vanpool Services, which focus on major activity centers in the region and connecting riders to similar destinations. In addition, the City is implementing a free Rideshare Program available for all residents in the community. The Rideshare Program is based on an online software program that matches two or more persons traveling together in a vehicle.



Vanpool Coordination



Transit Branding

## Illustrative Plan

The Illustrative Plan for the City of Grand Island and Hall County includes the Flexible Route Service concept. Due to the current budget constraints for the City, **this option is not feasible for at least three years**. Should additional funding become available in the near-term, the Transit Program Manager would begin initial planning efforts to implement the Flexible Route concept.

### ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

- **Flexible Route Service**
- 2 Routes
- Monday – Friday
- 6:00 am - 6:30 pm
- 6 peak vehicles in urban area
- 60-minute headways
- \$683,000 annual operating/ \$961,000 start-up costs
- 19,125 annual revenue hours
- **Intercity Bus Service**
- Monday - Friday
- Three trips per day
- Wifi-equipped vehicles
- 2 routes -
  - Hastings from/to Grand Island
  - Kearney from/to Grand Island

### FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PLAN

**Status Quo – Demand Response Service**

- Demand Response
- 24-hour Reservation
- Curb-to-curb service
- Monday – Friday
- 6:00 am – 5:00 pm
- 7 to 8 peak vehicles
- \$490,000
- \$2.00 base fare
- 12 vehicles

**NEW – Transit Service**

- Vanpool Service
- Rideshare Program

**NEW Changes**

- Branding for the transit service; new look, new image, new name.
- Increase in transit marketing from dedicated City staff oversight.
- Increased oversight of transit contract with dedicated City staff oversight.
- Planning for Intercity Bus Service to/ from Kearney and Hastings.

### FLEXIBLE ROUTE SERVICE

