**Services Offered**

Rushworth Community Taxi Service (RCTS) is initially offering two types of services, daily trips and event trips. Daily trips will run Monday to Friday, to and from local towns within a sixty kilometer radius. Event trips are to run weekends and public holiday periods to larger regional towns.

Daily trips will be door to door pickup and drop off, as asking clients to walk to a designated pick up location is onerous for particular cliental. An increase of five kilometers per return trip has been added to allow for door to door service. Project target is to offer two trips per day initially with capacity to provide more daily trips as requests for more services increase.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rushworth Community Taxi Service (1 client per trip) | | | | |
| Rushworth Outbound | Running Cost | Distance return km | Running cost per trip | Minimum charge per trip |
|
| Stanhope | 0.95 | 41 | $ 34.20 | $ 35.00 |
| Colbinabbin | 0.95 | 42 | $ 39.90 | $ 40.00 |
| Murchison | 0.95 | 44 | $ 41.80 | $ 42.00 |
| Tatura | 0.95 | 58 | $ 55.10 | $ 56.00 |
| Kyabram | 0.95 | 68 | $ 64.60 | $ 65.00 |
| Shepparton | 0.95 | 112 | $ 106.40 | $ 107.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Average |  | 60 | $ 57.00 | $ 57.50 |

Event trips are for client access to regional festivals, markets, exhibitions and other events. A driver is allocated from one of the volunteers available and charges are set on a return kilometer trip. Client groups are based on average of four per trip and cost is averaged out at thirty-two dollars per client, one hundred and twenty-five total per return trip. Increasing cost to cover driver access to events could be included, pending drivers’ request.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Regional events | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | one-way km | Return km | Running cost per km | $ per trip | Clients | Running cost per Client | Minimum charge per trip |
|
| Rushworth to Bendigo | 76 | 152 | 0.95 | $ 144.40 | 4 | $36.10 | $ 37.00 |
| Rushworth to Echuca | 65 | 130 | 0.95 | $ 123.50 | 4 | $30.88 | $ 31.00 |
| Rushworth to Shepparton | 56 | 112 | 0.95 | $ 106.40 | 4 | $26.60 | $ 27.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Averages | 66 | 131 |  | $ 124.77 |  | $31.19 | $ 31.67 |

Currently, the hire of an eight seater bus is more than one hundred and fifty dollars per day with cost of petrol not included.

**Current Transport Availability**

Transport services within Rushworth and neighboring town includes a bus service, out of town train station and taxi services.

A one-way bus service runs between Bendigo to Shepparton, morning and afternoon, weekdays. This service, although inexpensive, is restrictive as it has a set time and route and does not offer door to door pick up and drop off (Public Transport Victoria 2021).

East Murchison train station is located south of all local towns to Rushworth, being approximately 22 kilometers away. RCTS have in place trips to East Murchison train station for client access to Shepparton and Melbourne train lines.

Other taxi services, there is no local taxi service residing in Rushworth. Booking and cost per kilometer fees are charged as taxi must travel from out of town. With no volunteer driver base, other taxi services run at a higher rate as costs of sustaining their service is higher. Comparison table below highlights differences between Rushworth Community Taxi Service and other taxi services.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Other Taxi cost per km | |
| Cost per km | Base fee |
|
| $ 1.62 | $ 4.20 |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rushworth Outbound | Distance return km | Other Taxi cost per trip | RCFTS Minimum charge per trip | Difference per trip |
|
|
| Stanhope | 41 | $ 94.37 | $ 39.00 | -$ 55.37 |
| Colbinabbin | 47 | $ 107.06 | $ 45.00 | -$ 62.06 |
| Murchison | 49 | $ 111.29 | $ 47.00 | -$ 64.29 |
| Tatura | 63 | $ 140.88 | $ 60.00 | -$ 80.88 |
| Kyabram | 73 | $ 162.02 | $ 70.00 | -$ 92.02 |
| Shepparton | 117 | $ 255.04 | $ 112.00 | -$ 143.04 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Average | 65 | $ 145.11 | $ 62.17 | -$ 82.94 |

Other Taxi cost per kilometer is based on a Bendigo Taxi service taxi fare estimation (Bendigo Taxis 2021)

Table above shows a large difference per trip with RCTS cost of service in a comparison against other taxi services in the area. This is largely due to a volunteer driver base. Cost per kilometer of the RCTS service is more than sixty cents less and does not charge a booking fee. The RCTS is offering a transport service that is more affordable within Rushworth and neighboring regional townships. This allows for a local transport solution that is accessible compared to other means of transport.

**Concession Rates.**

No taxi concession rates are currently available for concession card holders within Victoria. Within RCTS funding models; full and concession fares can be offered. Reduced fares can be alleviated from negatively impacting on overall income of the taxi service, by compensation from increase of income from higher cliental numbers. Concession fares will allow the taxi service to be more accessible to a wider range of cliental.

A Multi-purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) is available though only offers discounts to people with severe disabilities. Volunteer driver training and extra support for vehicle transport would be required if a MPTP service is to be included. Cost of this service could be achieved within funding models with subsidized support through commercial Passenger Vehicles Victoria and Department of Health and Human Services.

**Future Services**

There are varying options to increase RCTS services, with varying sporting, social and hobby events running throughout the year, for example;

* A service running on every second Saturday to larger regional towns to provide weekend access for clients to visit shops and services unavailable locally
* Local football, cricket and netball clubs
* Winery tours
* Bus hire
* RSL clubs
* Theatre and movies
* Arts
* Linking partnerships with other community houses
* Linking with other transport services

Rushworth Community House currently runs a service to take clients to doctors and specialist medical appointments in neighboring and larger regional towns. This service utilizes volunteer drivers and their cars to transport clients to their destination. A combination of services could be looked at to continue providing a service without volunteers required to use their own vehicles.

**References**

Public Transport Victoria Website, Bendigo to Shepparton via Kyabram Bus Timetable, accessed 12/04/2021

<https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/route/timetable/11342/bendigo-shepparton-via-kyabram/#RoutePage:::datetime=2021-04-11T23%3A00%3A00.000Z&direction_id=388&stop_id=-1&_auth=9e3136d9ef55b25199204042ab5bc89acd02dce1a99fc996f4bc701df05e6793>

Bendigo Taxis, Bendigo Taxi Fares accessed 12/04/2021 <https://www.bendigotaxis.com.au/fares>