



Committee Report

To:	Warden McQueen and Members of Grey County Council
Council Date:	January 9, 2020
Subject / Report No:	CAOR-CW-01-20
Title:	Community Transportation Update
Prepared by:	Stephanie Stewart, Manager, Community Transportation
Reviewed by:	Kim Wingrove, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Grey County wide
Status:	

Recommendation

- 1. That report CAOR-CW-01-20 Community Transportation Update be received; and**
- 2. That County Council direct staff to proceed with and RFP to lease buses until March 2023; and**
- 3. That County Council approves a single source contract with First Student; and**
- 4. That the Warden and Clerk be authorized to execute a Transit Procurement Initiative (TPI) agreement with Metrolinx.**

Executive Summary

Grey County and the Township of Southgate are working collaboratively to develop the transit services required under the terms of their respective Community Transportation grant transfer payment agreements. The services are required to be in operation by Spring 2020 and the total \$2.3M in funding is to be expended by March 31, 2023. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of consultation undertaken, recent community survey results and transit system operating policies to be developed. It also provides an outline of the service levels and associated costs required to meet grant requirements. An enhanced level of service is also modelled for Council consideration and discussion.

Background and Discussion

On December 6th, 2019 a Grey Transit Route (GTR) survey was distributed for public input. The GTR survey was promoted through various media platforms across, Grey, Bruce and Dufferin County. As of January 2, 2020, 1037 individuals had responded to the survey. This survey has received a lot of positive attention from the public and has provided Grey County staff with valuable insight on the needs of riders. Survey results can be viewed in Appendix A.

Transit Operations

Discussions were held with other municipalities with experience initiating and operating a transit system including City of Owen Sound, Town of Collingwood, County of Simcoe, County of Wellington, Town of Orangeville. Input was also received from the County's Accessibility Advisory Committee, and representatives from Meaford, Town of the Blue Mountains, Chatsworth, Grey Highlands, Georgian Bluffs, South Bruce Peninsula, Hanover and Launch Pad Youth Activity Centre.

In determining the most cost-effective method of meeting or exceeding the transit services required under the terms of the transfer payment agreement with the Province of Ontario, Grey County staff have consulted numerous transit industry agencies regarding pricing and opportunities. A negotiated request for proposals was advertised and closed September 18, 2019. The County received several proposals; however no firm was able to provide a complete service at an affordable price.

Further consultation was undertaken to determine approximate costing for drivers and vehicles from First Student, City View, Mississauga Bus and Metrolinx. Appendix B demonstrates the costs required to operate the minimum service required by the province, and potential route options. Appendix C demonstrates the costs required to operate an enhanced service level and potential route options.

Transit Service Policies

The adoption of policies to guide the operation of the transit system is important to ensure the system can be operated safely, efficiently and that customers are provided with an enjoyable experience. Grey County staff are investigating the process and appropriateness of implementing policies on the following topics:

Behaviour/ Conduct

Animals

Smoking

Fares

Boarding and Exiting

Priority Seating

Parking

Support Person Assistance Card

Presumption

Penalties and Enforcement

Next Steps

Staff have reviewed various transit structures and cost models and have concluded that the most appropriate option for Grey County is to contract drivers and lease vehicles to deliver a piloted transit service in Grey County till 2023.

Furthermore, staff are recommending that County Council direct staff to single source the contracting of drivers to First Student. This company has a strong presence in the region and has been the successful service provider in neighboring municipalities and counties. First Student is currently driving for the City of Owen Sound, Municipality of Meaford, Town of Orangeville, Simcoe County and many others. Having access to a pool of trained, skilled drivers is critical to the success of Grey County's transit system.

In order to access competitively priced transit vehicles (should we decide to buy buses), cameras, monitoring software etc. many transit agencies throughout the province have joined the Transit Procurement Initiative provided by Metrolinx. Staff received a presentation on the program and believe that the buying power it provides would be very difficult to obtain on our own. Staff recommend that County Council approves the signing of the governance agreement, attached in Appendix D.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

Upon County Council direction, staff will finalize contract details with appropriate agencies (First Student, Metrolinx, Province of Ontario). Bus stop agreements along the determined route will be negotiated with property owners.

Financial and Resource Implications

As noted in Appendix B, using the recommended service delivery model of leased vehicles and contracted drivers, Grey County can meet the service levels required by the transfer payment agreement. Enhancing the services as outlined in Appendix C would require additional investment of between \$454,000 and \$612,000 annually.

Relevant Consultation

Grey County Legislative Services

Grey County Finance Department

Grey County Transportation Services

Grey County and City of Owen Sound Accessibility Committees

Grey County

Municipality of Chatsworth

Municipality of Georgian Bluffs

Municipality of Grey Highlands

Municipality of Southgate

Municipality of West Grey

Municipality of Meaford

The Town of Blue Mountains

The Town of Hanover

City of Owen Sound

Bruce County

Municipality of South Bruce Peninsula

Municipality of North Bruce Peninsula

Dufferin County

Town of Orangeville

Town of Shelburne

Simcoe County

Appendices and Attachments

[Appendix A- Grey County Community Transportation Survey](#)

[Appendix B- Transit Service Grant Requirements](#)

[Appendix C- Enhanced Service Option](#)

[Appendix D- TPI Governance Agreement](#)