



Committee Report

To: Councillor Milt McIver, Chair and
Members of the Transportation & Environmental Services
Committee

From: Amanda Froese
Director of Transportation & Environmental Services

Date: January 26, 2023

Re: Public Transit in Bruce County Update

Staff Recommendation:

The Public Transit in Bruce County Update report is for information.

Background:

Grey County provides Public Transit services to two locations in Bruce County, South Bruce Peninsula and Brockton through their Grey Transit Route Service. Grey Transit Route (GTR) saw an increase of 335% overall in ridership in seven months of 2022. They receive revenue of \$5 per ride, through The Provincial Community Transportation Grant (up \$462,179.83 per year for 2023-24 and 2024-25) and their own tax levy.

On December 8th, Grey County Council was presented with an overview and update on the transit system and provided staff with three options to determine the level of service for GRT. One option was to eliminate the Flesherton to Hanover Route, as it is the most expensive route, even though ridership had been increasing in an effort to 'balance utilization and resource requirements'. Direction was received for staff to eliminate Route 6 that services Flesherton to Hanover, and in turn Hanover to Walkerton. Therefore, the service will be terminated on March 31st, 2023. In 2022, Bruce County provided \$22,000 to subsidize for the Walkerton to Hanover portion of this route.

Grey Transit Route #5 services Owen Sound to Wiarton and Wiarton to Sauble Beach. In 2022 Bruce County and Southern Bruce Peninsula subsidized this route by \$80,000, and it is proposed in the County's 2023 budget to contribute \$41,500 to this route again. South Bruce Peninsula has also requested \$45,000 in their budget for 2023.

At this time, with the removal of Route 6, the proposed County Transit Budget can be reduced to \$41,500 from \$70,000, which covers 50% of the Wiarton to Sauble Beach route.

Route #5 has continued to see growth and is continued to be used for inter county tourism and workforce needs to both Wiarton and Sauble Beach. 2021 saw a total of 245 riders with 115 riders continuing on the Sauble Beach extension. These numbers increase significantly to have 1363 riders on the route in 2022 with 434 using the Sauble Beach route. Tourists using this route are more likely to spend money in the area, supporting existing tourism businesses and encouraging others to grow and expand. This route also provides individuals the

opportunity to access employment options both inside and outside the community. It is anticipated that this route will continue to grow and continue to provide a positive economic impact to the area.

The Bruce County Transit Demand Study is underway. The Consultant is currently reviewing the existing background information and preparing for public consultation on needs and desires for alternative transportation options. Public transit will be a consideration, but its form is not yet defined. Recommendations should be presented to Committee in the fall of 2023.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

There are no financial, staffing, legal or IT considerations associated with this report. The 2023 budget request for transportation is reduced to \$41,500 since the extension of the Route #6 (Flesherton to Hanover) into Walkerton, is not required now that Grey County has decided to eliminate.

The Bruce County Transit Demand Study is an already budgeted 2022 expense, with support from a Federal Grant.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

The Planning and Economic Development Department have been consulted and work with the TES Department on Transit initiative.

Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:

n/a

Approved for Submission:

Derrick Thomson
Chief Administrative Officer