



Staff Report to Council - for Direction

Title: Smart Communities Association Memorandum of Understanding - Rideshare Program

From: Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

Date: October 17, 2024

Report Number: CDO-2024-019

Staff Recommendation:

That Council authorize the Warden and Clerk to sign and enter into the memorandum of understanding between the County of Bruce and the Smart Communities Association.

Report Summary:

Bruce County is working towards launching a Smart Commute Program to encourage and facilitate ridesharing across the County.

There are several municipalities across Ontario that currently operate a Smart Commute Program have come together to form a Smart Commute Association.

It would benefit Bruce County to become a member of the Smart Commute Association. Membership helps provide support and resources to Bruce County as we work to launch a Smart Commute Bruce County program. Costs associated with participation are through in-kind support. Formal membership requires Bruce County enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Smart Commute Association.

Staff request that Council authorize the Warden and Clerk to enter into this memorandum of understanding with the Smart Commute Association.

Background/Analysis:

Staff are progressing towards launching a ridesharing program using a program called Smart Commute - Bruce County in late Fall 2024.

The Smart Commute program was established by a core group of municipalities in the Greater Toronto Region including the City of Toronto, Hamilton, and the Regions of Halton, York and Durham. These municipalities formed an association in 2019 - with the City of London and Greater Sudbury joining more recently. These municipalities form the Smart Commute Association and work together to deliver the Smart Commute Program.

The Smart Commute Association helps support municipalities to launch and support a technology enabled ridesharing platform that has been developed by a private company called RideShark that includes both a smartphone App and web-based platform with modules to encourage carpooling, transit use, walking and cycling.

Any municipality in Ontario may apply for membership in the Smart Commute Association to join the municipalities already delivering the Smart Commute program. Formal membership requires Bruce County to enter the Smart Commute Association Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 1).

A significant benefit to joining the Smart Commute Association is that Bruce County can work with other municipalities in Ontario who have been delivering the Smart Commute program over the past 5 years. Smart Commute Association members share tools and resources that will assist Bruce County to launch, promote and encourage participation in the Smart Commute program locally.

Smart Commute -Bruce County will focus primarily on encouraging users to carpool and will also create opportunities for those who wish to connect to walk or cycle together.

The initial role out of the Smart Commute -Bruce County program will be focused on engaging large-scale-employers within the County, as it creates the most potential to boost the number of drivers in the system and helps to meet a key transportation need identified in the [Bruce County Transit Demand and Feasibility Study](#) completed in December 2023 - connecting people to jobs.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

Costs associated with the delivery of the Smart Commute Bruce County program are included in the approved Transportation & Environmental Services 2024 budget, as well as the proposed 2025 draft budget.

There are no direct financial impacts from entering into the MOU. The MOU has been reviewed by finance and the County risk management specialist with no concerns noted.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

Transportation & Environmental Services, the Office of the CAO, Finance and Information Technology have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:

Growth and Innovation - Strengthen County's use of technology and innovative initiatives
Growth and Innovation - Promote responsible growth

Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:

Advance work on short-term recommendations outlined in the [2023 Bruce County Transit Feasibility and Demand Study](#)

Report Author & Departmental Approval:

Claire Dodds, Commissioner of Community Development

Approved for Submission:

Christine MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Smart Commute Association Memorandum of Understanding