



Staff Report to Council - for Direction

Title: Court Security and Prisoner Transportation Funding Request

From: Sam Dinsmore, Director of Corporate Services

Date: February 6, 2025

Report Number: CS-2025-005

Staff Recommendation:

That Bruce County provide funding to the Municipality of Brockton on an annual basis to fund costs related to Court Security and Prisoner Transfer that are not covered by provincial funding, as outlined in Option 2 of the Staff Report # CS-2025-005 dated February 6, 2025; and

That the 2025 costs be funded from the Tax Stabilization Reserve.

Report Summary:

At the December 5, 2024 Council meeting the County received correspondence from Brockton (Attachment #1) requesting funding for Court Security and Prisoner Transportation Costs. The courthouse for most of Bruce County is located in Walkerton and these costs, as levied by the Ontario Provincial Police, are billed to the host municipality.

Included in the report written to Brockton Council was the below information which outlined the annual cost, the grant received, and the net cost to Brockton.

Year	Cost	Grant	Net Cost to Brockton
2025*	\$894,993	TBD	TBD
2024	\$531,685	\$379,503	\$152,182
2023	\$586,399	\$419,692	\$166,707
2022	\$410,718	\$267,504	\$143,214
2021	\$432,716	\$296,902	\$135,814
2020	\$326,381	\$245,287	\$81,094

*The 2025 grant amount has not yet been released by the Province.

Background/Analysis:

In the past six months both Grey and Huron Counties have received similar requests from Owen Sound and Goderich respectively. Both Counties have agreed to fund the costs not covered by the grant. Grey and Huron are budgeting approximately \$275,000 and \$185,000 respectively for 2025.

The courthouse in Grey County is owned by Infrastructure Ontario. Huron County owns the Courthouse in Goderich and rent the facilities to Infrastructure Ontario, which is the same as Bruce County.

Other counties including Dufferin, Lambton and Oxford all fund at least in part, the costs not covered by the provincial grant for the Court Security and Prisoner Transportation costs.

The court system within Bruce and Grey Counties do not strictly follow county boundaries. A few lower tiers within Grey County are closer geographically to the Walkerton Courthouse and therefore use that courthouse and the same applies for a few lower tiers in Bruce County that use the Owen Sound Courthouse.

Staff have compiled three options for Council consideration:

Option 1 - Status Quo

Under this option the Municipality of Brockton would continue to fund the costs above the grant without any funding aid from the County.

Option 2 - Fund the Full Request

This option would see the County agree to fund all costs not covered by the annual grant. The County would budget a set amount and each year and would reconcile with Brockton to cover the full costs. If Council proceeds with this option staff would suggest including \$250,000 in the 2026 budget with the 2025 cost being covered by the Tax Stabilization Reserve (TSR). If the funding given is below the \$250,000 the difference would be transferred into the TSR at year-end and any funding given over the \$250,000 would be funded from the TSR.

Option 3 - Set a Funding Limit

This option would see the County budget a set amount each year and any costs over that amount would remain the responsibility of Brockton. Similar to Option 2, starting in 2026 at Council direction, the County would carry an amount in the annual budget which would help fund Brockton's unfunded costs, and any cost above this amount would be funded by Brockton.

ROMA Delegation

Recently County officials presented a delegation at the annual ROMA conference to both the Solicitor General and Attorney General. The request was based on two main principals:

- **Increased and Predictable Funding:** Enhance the existing court security grant program to ensure timely and adequate financial support aligned with municipal budgeting cycles.
- **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Engage with rural municipalities, the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, and other relevant stakeholders to develop policies that provide host municipalities with greater engagement in court security mandates and associated costs.

These measures will alleviate the financial burden on host municipalities, promote fairness among regions, and ensure critical local services are not compromised.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

If Council direction is to proceed with funding Brockton's request, staff would recommend including a budget of \$250,000, roughly 0.40% levy increase, in the 2026 budget.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

Lynn Hatten, Deputy Treasurer

Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:

Community and Partnerships - Enhance and grow partnerships

Community and Partnerships - Build a strong and inclusive community

Departmental Approval:

Sam Dinsmore, Director of Corporate Services

Approved for Submission:

Christine MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

Attachment #1 - Brockton Funding Request letter