



County Council

Meeting Date: April 8, 2025

Submitted by: Cara A. Finn, Director of Economic Development and Tourism
Anum Maqsood, Community Transportation Project Manager

Subject: Community Transportation Grant Program Transfer Payment
Amending Agreement

BACKGROUND:

On April 30, 2018, Middlesex County received a letter confirming its eligibility for funding of up to \$1,500,000 for the inter-community transit project.

The Community Transportation Grant Program Transfer Payment Agreement was received on July 4, 2019, and on July 16, 2019, Middlesex County Council approved the agreement for the implementation of a microtransit service connecting Thames Centre with Woodstock and London.

On September 21, 2020, the inter-community transit service, Middlesex County Connect, was launched.

On June 28, 2021, the Province of Ontario extended funding for the Community Transportation Grant Program for an additional two years, until March 31, 2025.

On February 1, 2024, Middlesex County received a letter confirming additional funding of \$280,000.

On March 25, 2025, the Province of Ontario extended the Community Transportation Grant Program for an additional year, until March 31, 2026.

ANALYSIS:

Middlesex County Connect has been operating since September 21, 2020, with Voyago as the service provider. The grant funding was initially scheduled to end on March 31, 2025; however, the Province of Ontario has extended the Community Transportation (CT) Grant Program until March 31, 2026. This extension provides recipients with additional time to fully utilize their CT allocation.

At this time, it is anticipated that existing Middlesex County Connect routes will continue until August 31, 2025, using residual CT funding. The inter-community transit system is

currently undergoing a comprehensive assessment, which is expected to be completed by mid-2025.

The Middlesex County Connect service has provided affordable and accessible transportation to residents, enabling them to access post-secondary education, employment, medical appointments, and social programs. Ridership has steadily increased, with a 678% growth from 2022 to 2024.

Currently, three fixed routes operate during peak hours:



- Route 1: Lucan, Ilderton, Arva, and London (weekdays)
- Route 2: Woodstock, Ingersoll, Putnam, Dorchester, and London (weekdays)
- Route 3: Dorchester, London, St. Thomas, and Southwold (Monday–Saturday)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus, Goals, or Objectives:

Strategic Focus	Goals	Objectives
<div>Cultivating Community Vitality</div> 	Advance a diverse, healthy, and engaged community across Middlesex County	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote and support community wellness• Innovate social and community services• Attract, retain, and engage youth in our community• Champion and encourage active transportation and public transit opportunities
<div>Promoting Service Excellence</div> 	Innovate and transform municipal service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anticipate and align municipal service delivery to emerging needs and expectations• Engage, educate and inform residents, businesses, and visitors of county services and community activities• Strengthen our advocacy and lobbying efforts with other government bodies• Collaborate with strategic partners to leverage available resources and opportunities• Build organizational capacity and capabilities

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Community Transportation Grant Program Transfer Payment Amending Agreement be received for information;

AND THAT a by-law be introduced at the April 8, 2025, Council meeting to:

- a) Authorize and approve Amending Agreement No. 3 to the Community Transportation Grant Program Transfer Payment Agreement; and
- b) Authorize the Warden and the County Clerk to execute the agreement.