



SUBJECT: Safe Restart Funding Municipal Transit Stream – phase 4 funding

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Corporate Strategy

Report Number: CS-04-23

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 155-03-01

Date to Committee: January 9, 2023

Date to Council: January 24, 2023

Recommendation:

Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute on behalf of The Corporation of the City of Burlington the transfer payment agreement, and any other ancillary document (s) or amendment(s), between the City of Burlington and the Province of Ontario regarding the Safe Restart Funding Municipal Transit Stream – phase 4 funding, to the satisfaction of the Executive Director of Legal Services and Corporation Counsel.

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
 - Improve integrated city mobility
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Background and Discussion:

Throughout the pandemic, the federal and provincial governments came together to provide municipal transit services with more than \$2 billion in dedicated funding to help transit systems respond to the impacts of COVID-19.

To address the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 in 2022, the federal and provincial government are each providing \$252.5 million for a total of \$505 million of funding for

municipal transit systems in Ontario. This funding is referred to as Phase 4 of the SRA Municipal Transit stream program or SRA4. On December 7, 2022, the Minister of Transportation wrote to Mayor Meed Ward to inform her that the City of Burlington is eligible to receive up to \$1,567,656 to help address our COVID-19 municipal transit pressures incurred from February 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. Prior to the December announcement the City of Burlington has received \$5,862,931 in SRA - Municipal Transit Stream funding for Burlington Transit.

Strategy/process

The SRA4 municipal funding allocations were determined on a base amount of \$5,000 to all eligible municipalities, plus a proportional share of reported actual under the first three phases of SRA funding.

Financial Matters:

The Ministry of Transportation will determine the City's final funding allocation based on our submission of a detailed report outlining the financial impacts and costs of operations between February 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. The report must be submitted by January 31, 2023. Eligible expenditures under the SRA4 include:

- Farebox revenue losses;
- Advertising revenue losses;
- Costs associated with changes in fuel consumption e.g. increases due to having to run additional buses;
- Employee related costs; and
- Costs for signage and other means of communications related to COVID-19 pandemic e.g. social distance guidance.

Total Financial Impact

To establish a proper baseline for reporting the COVID-19 related impacts that uses a pre-COVID context, the province has advised municipalities to use their pre-COVID 2020 operating budget when calculating the COVID related financial impacts.

Source of Funding

SRA Municipal Transit Stream Funding

	Initial Funding	Top-up	Supplemental	Total
Phase 1	\$ 1,571,213	\$ 938,188		\$ 2,509,401
Phase 2	\$ 1,036,779			\$ 1,036,779
Phase 3	\$ 1,523,832	\$ 582,873	\$ 210,046	\$ 2,316,751
Phase 4	\$ 1,567,656			\$ 1,567,656
Total				\$ 7,430,587

Other Resource Impacts

While the City is extremely grateful for the funding, the reporting requirements have been extensive, and the turnaround times have been extremely short. The great work by staff in meeting the deadlines and submitting the necessary reports has resulted in \$1,731,107 of additional funding (top up for Phase 1, top up for Phase 3 and supplemental for Phase 3).

Climate Implications

Public transit plays a critical role in local climate mitigation by providing residents with the opportunity to utilize public transit to decrease greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles for single use trips. This funding ensures that transit remains a viable and stable option and promotes the goals identified in the City's Climate Change Action Plan.

Engagement Matters:

There are no public engagement matters associated with this report.

Conclusion:

The City of Burlington appreciates the continued commitment of the federal and provincial governments in supporting municipal transit operations throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Senior government funding programs such as this, have been life lines given to transit agencies.

Burlington Transit pre-COVID boardings were well over 10,000 per day. In March 2020, the boardings plummeted. Only recently have we started to see some recovery in our boardings.

The SRA4 funding will help address budgeted revenue losses and continued costs incurred related to the COVID-19 pandemic between February 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

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Government Relations Manager

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Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.