



TO:	GENERAL COMMITTEE
SUBJECT:	AUTHORIZATION TO PURSUE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH SUSTAINMOBILITY
WARD:	ALL
PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT:	M. BALOGUN, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, EXT. 5035
SUBMITTED BY:	S.SCHLICHTER, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL:	Z. LIFSHIZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INVEST BARRIE
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL:	M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the Director of Business Development be authorized to sign on behalf of the City of Barrie, a no cost, three (3) year partnership agreement with SustainMobility, to develop a pilot transportation demand management (TDM) project that will deliver the Smart Commute Program to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management, Executive Director of Access Barrie, and in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Report Overview

2. The purpose of this report is to seek authority to execute a partnership agreement with SustainMobility on behalf of the City to implement the Smart Commute program, should the project be satisfactory to the Director of Business Development, Executive Director – Access Barrie, the General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management, and in a form satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services.
3. SustainMobility is a non-profit organization that will be launching several transportation demand management (TDM) programs under the Commute Ontario brand. The organization recently received a Trillium grant to deliver a three (3) year program in seven (7) regions across Ontario.
4. SustainMobility has identified the City of Barrie as a lead municipality for the Central Ontario region and has asked the City to enter into a partnership arrangement that would showcase the City as a partner and develop the program and marketing campaign over the course of the summer months, to launch the full TDM program by October, 2018.
5. SustainMobility is proposing to deliver a Commute Ontario program, similar to the MetroLinx Smart Commute program that works to help commuters change their travel behaviour by providing a number of services including workplace-based support, such as site assessment, promotion of travel options, carpool matching, employee vanpool programs, emergency ride home, tips for travelling via walking, cycling and transit. SustainMobility would be providing a web platform for regional ridesharing, full promotional & marketing support, emergency ride home program, and access to the Commute Ontario Information Portal.

6. As a partner, their key expectations of the City include encouraging local businesses to participate in the program, promoting the program on the City's website, collecting and maintaining data on the program, and membership on a province-wide Commute Ontario Steering Committee which will provide recommendations to improve the pilot project.

ANALYSIS

7. In 2017, Invest Barrie began to investigate the Smart Commute program as a way to assist companies seeking options to support current and prospective employees in commuting to/from work given the different shift hours that run outside of transit operations or outside of transit serviced areas including surrounding Simcoe County municipalities.
8. Smart Commute is a program spearheaded by Metrolinx in partnership with municipalities in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) as a way to encourage commuters to try different travel modes (walking, cycling, transit, and carpooling) to get to their destinations. A key feature of the program is a technology that matches commuters for car-pooling purposes.
9. Conversations with Metrolinx confirm that there isn't existing opportunity to expand the program beyond the GTHA. Options exist for the City to implement its own TDM programming at its own cost. Research into other municipalities revealed annual operating budgets of \$45,000 to over \$200,000 to implement a Smart Commute type program.
10. Organizations that currently run the Smart Commute program reveal that it has greatly helped with talent attraction into their communities as well as attracting companies who want to offer employees various perks while at the same time meeting corporate social responsibility goals.
11. Given that Metrolinx does not have an intent to expand the program beyond its existing boundaries, Commute Ontario does provide a cost free program to the City in order to pilot demand.
12. According to the latest 2016 Statistics Canada Census, 59.8% of Barrie residents commute within the City, of these 71.3% drive alone, 13.2% carpool, 6.6% take public transit, 7.7% use active transport, and 0.5% use another method. Since the majority of residents work within the City, the Commute Ontario program would assist in encouraging residents to carpool, take public transit, or various forms of active transportation.
13. SustainMobility is seeking the City's partnership in an agreement, which mainly outlines their responsibilities during the three (3) year term including developing a customized regional carpooling technology tool, creating all the marketing and promotional materials, running various campaigns needed to recruit companies and commuters to join the program, and collecting data associated with the project, all at no-cost to the City of Barrie. The City would seek to share in the data collected.
14. After the initial three (3) year pilot project, SustainMobility has estimated that it will cost from \$30,000 to \$45,000 per year for municipalities in the Central Ontario region to cover the cost of the Commute Ontario program. Signing the partnership agreement does not bind the City of Barrie to continue with the program and incur any associated costs after the initial three-year pilot program is over.
15. SustainMobility has demonstrated support to the City to explore models and funding solutions to continue the program beyond the three (3) years, should it be successful. Staff would then report back to General Committee with recommendations to continue the program and funding sources through the business planning process.

16. Given that that partnership agreement requires the approval of Council, Staff are requesting authority to complete the due diligence investigations and sign the agreement during Council recess, to ensure the initiative moves forward, should the decision be made to proceed.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

17. The following environmental matters have been considered in the development of the recommendation:
- a) A transportation demand management program, if successful, could mean less cars on the road – reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, and improving air quality.

ALTERNATIVES

18. There is one alternative for General Committee to consider:

Alternative #1

General Committee could choose not to authorize the Director of Business Development to execute the partnership agreement with SustainMobility.

This alternative is not recommended given that SustainMobility intends to launch the TDM program in Central Ontario and there is an opportunity for the City to be showcased and leverage the data of the program. If the City of Barrie does not partner with them, we would lose logo recognition in any of their promotional materials that will be distributed to our local companies – many of whom the City has attempted to assist on this issue in the past. As well, we will not be given any of the competitive intelligence/data that may assist with various updates to plans including Active Transportation, Cycling Masterplan, etc.

FINANCIAL

19. There are no financial implications for the Corporation resulting from the proposed recommendations beyond Staff time to support the implementation, which can be accommodated within existing workplans.
20. After the initial three (3) year pilot project, SustainMobility has estimated that it will cost from \$30,000 to \$45,000 per year for municipalities in the Central Ontario region to cover the cost of the Commute Ontario program.

LINKAGE TO 2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN

21. The recommendation(s) included in this Staff Report support the following goals identified in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan:
- ☒ Vibrant Business Environment

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22. Exploring the partnership agreement with SustainMobility facilities multiple strategic objectives for the business community, as well as for promoting an inclusive & liveable community. Should a partnership be pursued, the Commute Ontario program could have the potential to assist with various talent and company attraction services, as well as provide a new tool for business retention, all at no cost to the City for a three (3)-year period.