



Municipality of Brighton
Committee of the Whole
8 February 2010

Provincial Gas Tax Funding for Transit

Recommendation:

That Committee of the Whole give direction to staff to:

- (a) Request a report from the Municipality of Quinte West stating the amount of Gas Tax funding for transit that was obtained on Brighton's behalf for the years 2009 and 2010, and the figures for Brighton's population and ridership that were included in application for those funds.
- (b) Research and report back to Council on the possibility of commencing in 2011 Brighton making a separate claim for gas tax funding for transit; and

Further that Council direct Councillor Dave Cutler to review available gas tax information with the Quinte Access board of directors (during 2010 budget deliberations) to ensure that the annual request by Quinte Access for an additional operating subsidy for 2010 fully takes into account gas tax funding attributable to the Municipality of Brighton.

Background/Purpose:

Each Ontario municipality that provides transportation services within its jurisdiction is entitled to a share of Provincial Gas Tax funding that is drawn from a pool of funds generated by assigning 2 cents per litre of gas taxes. The amount allocated to each municipality is based 70% on ridership and 30% on population.

Historically the only service that has been considered by the Municipality of Brighton as being eligible for this funding is a 'specialized' transportation service provided to seniors and persons with disabilities through a partnership with Quinte Access (QA).

QA is an independent not-for-profit organization based in Trenton that provides 'specialized' transport services to the Municipalities of Quinte West, Brighton and Prince Edward County with each contributing to operating and capital costs based on usage.

Service is provided free to persons receiving benefits under the Provincial OSDP program and for other passengers a subsidized fare is charged. An information brochure is attached. It should be noted that QA provides an excellent service that is vital to its Brighton clients.

QA also operates Quinte West's municipal transit system as a separate and distinct service but operated out of the same office.

Under an agreement established some time ago Brighton's gas tax allocation for transit is paid to the Municipality of Quinte West and a joint sum is transferred to QA; both municipalities also contribute a subsidy amount established by the QA board, from their individual municipal resources.

Prince Edward County has a different arrangement; they collect their own gas tax funding and pay QA on a fee-for-service basis at a rate established by the QA board. Demand for service in Brighton is low compared to the other two communities. During 2009 Brighton residents received service of 966 one-way trips compared to 4040 for Prince Edward and 15,665 for Quinte West.

Analysis/Comments:

The payment of Brighton gas tax funds through Quinte West makes it difficult to accurately determine the total amount funding for QA specialized service that is attributable to Brighton.

Additionally Brighton cannot readily take advantage of this funding source to assist other transit services the Municipality sponsors or supports, both now and in the future. Current examples are the Summer Shuttle Bus service to Presqu'ile Park and transport services provided by Community Care.

Bringing the gas tax funding 'in house' may solve both these problems.

Financial Implications:

Enable an accurate accounting of Brighton's financial contribution to Quinte Access specialized service.

Facilitate a potential source of additional funding for other transit initiatives sponsored by the Municipality.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

Principle 6: Provide a local government that is transparent and accountable.

Value 2: Fiscal responsibility.

Attachments:

Quinte Access brochure.

Submitted by: Dave Cutler, Councillor
3 February 2010