

**COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION GRANT PROGRAM**  
**SUMMARY OF WEBINAR QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

**1. Is there flexibility on the application deadline?**

No. The deadline for applications is February 28, 2018 5:00 p.m. EST. Grants Ontario encourages applicants to register on the Transfer Payment Common Registration by February 5, 2018.

**2. Who is eligible to apply for the Community Transportation Grant Program, Municipal Stream?**

All incorporated Ontario municipalities (lower-tier, upper-tier, and single-tier) are eligible to apply for the Municipal Stream. For example, Simcoe County and/or its lower-tier municipalities may apply for grant funding.

**3. Our municipality is receiving pilot funding and is starting to receive the provincial Dedicated Gas Tax Funds for public transportation program. Are we eligible to apply for grant funding for intercommunity transportation service?**

Municipalities that received CT pilot funding are eligible to apply for grant funding. This includes funding to continue the pilot, to build on the pilot, or to create new local and/or long distance service.

As per Part 3c of the Guidelines, funds from the provincial Dedicated Gas Tax Funds for Public Transportation Program must not be used for CT Projects being proposed in the application.

**4. How do applicants know which regional area their proposed project serves (i.e., northern region)?**

Applicants should refer to Figure 1 of the Community Transportation Grant Program - Municipal Stream Application Form to determine which region their proposed project(s) will serve.

**5. Does the project work plan need to include details over the entire five-year program period? Can the project be modified during this time?**

Yes, the Project Work Plan must provide details on major milestones and tasks for the implementation and operation of the project over the entire five-year program

period e.g. service monitoring and project reporting post implementation of service. Municipalities may modify their services and their partnerships over the program period to respond appropriately to changes in travel demand, to gain new ridership, or to meet changing mobility needs in their communities. Refer to Part 6d of the Guidelines for more information on the terms and conditions of the Agreement.

**6. What if a local community transportation project is dependent on a long-distance scheduled intercommunity transportation service? Are projects evaluated separately?**

Yes, the merits of each application will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Criteria outlined in Part 6 of the Application Guidelines. There are separate criteria for projects proposing long-distance routes. Municipalities applying for both levels of funding will have their project proposals evaluated separately as two applications. Please refer to page 19 and 20 on the Guidelines for more information.

If a proposed local community transportation project is integral to a proposed long-distance intercommunity project, this linkage can be described in the Application Form, and the Ministry can consider this, as a part of the evaluation process.

**7. Is service to Indigenous communities prioritized in the evaluation for intercommunity long-distance projects?**

For “local” projects, service that links to Indigenous communities will be evaluated higher in Question 8 of the application form. Intercommunity transportation projects must be available to the general public, including Indigenous peoples. Municipalities proposing a long-distance scheduled intercommunity transportation service should meet all requirements on page 12 of the Guidelines. Page 20 of the Guidelines outlines the evaluation criteria for long-distance projects.

**8. Cash Contributions**

**a. Do projects that include cash contributions score higher in the evaluation stage?**

Under the “Funding Requirements and Project Budget” evaluation criteria (20% weighted value), projects that include cash contributions from the applicant or partner community organizations and/or funding from other grant programs will score higher.

**b. Are in-kind contributions considered as contributions as well?**

In-kind contributions should be identified in the Project Budget, and is taken into consideration in the evaluation of the budget.

**c. Small rural communities may only be able to offer in-kind contributions rather than cash contributions. Will applications that only include in-kind contributions be scored lower?**

Applications will be evaluated based on a number of set criteria, such as how well the proposed project meets the needs of their community and improves services, as well as a well-thought out work plan and budget.

Applications that include cash contributions and/or funding from other grant programs will score higher, but as part of the overall evaluation of the project budget in Question 19 of the application form. This section of the form is one of four evaluation criteria: the *Funding Requirements and Project Budget* (with a total weighted value of 20%).

**9. As community organizations collaborate with local municipalities, is it worth applying through the Municipal Stream and the forthcoming grant stream available to non-municipal groups?**

The Ministry of Transportation are encouraging municipalities to apply for grant funding to meet the needs and travel demands of their communities.

Community organizations that are partnering with a municipality(ies) on a community transportation project under the Municipal Stream may also apply for funding and lead projects under the “non-municipal” grant stream. Proposed projects under the “non-municipal” stream may build on a community transportation project funded by the Municipal Stream or respond to other transportation needs in the area.

The ministry anticipates that municipal applicants will be notified of the final selection of successful grant recipients in spring 2018, in advance of the launch of the Non-Municipal Stream (planned for summer 2018).

**10. Is it possible to apply for the local community transportation grant and then apply for a grant to provide long-distance scheduled intercommunity transportation service, if there is demand?**

No, there is only one intake for the Community Transportation Grant Program, Municipal Stream. The deadline for applications for the Municipal Stream is February 28, 2018. Municipal applicants should propose a project that meets the needs and travel demands in their community. Municipalities may modify their services and their partnerships over the program period to respond appropriately to changes in travel demand, to gain new ridership, or to meet any changing mobility needs in their communities.

**11. We plan to apply to both levels of funding but our long-distance intercommunity transportation project is more important. Can we prioritize projects so that the local community transportation project does not compromise the long-distance project?**

The Ministry of Transportation will evaluate the merits of each application based on the Evaluation Criteria outlined in Part 6 of the Application Guidelines. There are separate criteria for projects proposing long-distance routes. Municipalities applying for both levels of funding will have their CT Project proposals evaluated separately as two applications. Our advice is to provide the best application proposal you can that best meets the transportation needs of your community.

**12. What if a partnering municipality or community organization is involved in multiple project proposals? How does this impact the Ministry's evaluation of these applications?**

This doesn't impact the evaluation of the application. Municipal applicants and its partnering community organizations would need to determine the project team has the capacity to lead and/or undertake multiple projects.

Note, a municipal applicant may only receive one grant per level of funding.

**13. Feasibility Studies**

**a. Does the Community Transportation Grant Program fund feasibility studies?**

Yes, grant funding may be utilized to pay for consultant services to undertake a feasibility study, provided that the study helps to plan, implement and operate the

community transportation project over the program period. Please refer to Eligible Expenditures on pg. 12 – 14 in the Guidelines.

**b. Can a feasibility study be undertaken to examine the expansion of the proposed project to other municipalities in the County?**

Yes, grant funding may be utilized to pay for consultant services to undertake a feasibility study, to determine whether the project and/or partnerships can be modified to serve other municipalities in the County, over the program period.

**c. If a feasibility study is done and shows that a transportation service is not feasible, can a community withdraw from the funding program?**

Grant funding will be awarded to projects that meet the requirements outlined in the Guidelines, which includes a strong business case on how the proposed project meets the needs of their community and improves services, as well as a well-thought out work plan and budget.

The terms and conditions of grant funding, including early termination of the project, will be stipulated in the Transfer Payment Agreement between the province and the grant recipient.

**14. If a municipality wants to propose a project that would increase the level of existing intercommunity transportation service from one day/week to daily service, would this be considered a duplication of service?**

Municipal applicants may propose a long-distance scheduled intercommunity project where there is currently no service or insufficient service, and there is an identified unmet travel demand. If the service proposed is substantially different from the service that is available and meets the identified transportation needs and the requirements of the program, it may be eligible. Please refer to page 12 of the Guidelines for more information.

**15. Is there a target for fares (i.e., a target percentage of operating costs)?**

The Community Transportation Grant Program does not define a targeted fare recovery ratio. Please refer to Part 4d of the Guidelines for more information on fares.

**16. When does the community transportation project need to be implemented?**

As per Part 3 of the Guidelines and the Project Work Plan, the transportation service must be implemented within one year of the effective date of the Agreement (assume May 2018) and operate until the expiry of the CT Program, March 31, 2023.

**17. Will the province provide funding beyond the five-year period?**

No, funding under the Community Transportation Grant Program will only be provided until March 31, 2023.

**18. Is there a penalty for withdrawing from the program early?**

Successful grant recipients will enter into a Transfer Payment Agreement with the province. This Agreement will stipulate the terms and conditions of grant funding, including in the event of a project concluding before the program period (March 31, 2023).

**19. How will the provincial elections affect the launch of the non-municipal stream?**

The Ministry of Transportation cannot comment on this. The ministry is continuing its work to launch the Non-Municipal Stream in summer 2018, as planned.