

County to study request for GO service in town

Written By **JASEN OBERMEYER**

Dufferin County's councillors have directed staff to assist in gathering information that can form part of the basis of a request for GO bus service expansion into Shelburne.

The motion was put forth by Shelburne Deputy Mayor Steve Anderson, and unanimously approved by council last Thursday, Jan. 10. County staff will also work with local municipal staff, being referred to the County's Strategic Planning process.

"We certainly feel that there would be strong ridership and use," said Deputy Mayor Anderson. "It's obvious that there's an explosion of growth in Shelburne, and Grand Valley is experiencing the same thing as well."

Despite previous lobbying efforts made by Shelburne, there has been no indication of a commitment by Metrolinx, GO bus's operator, to expand or improve service within Dufferin County.

Mayor Wade Mills explained the current GO Transit line from Brampton to Orangeville has one of the lowest ridership in the province, and argues that riders from Shelburne will not only be beneficial for those commuting from the town, but bolster ridership on the line. "If we can help to support the ridership of that existing line, I think that's a win for everybody involved. It makes the existing line sustainable in the long run."

A transit survey and study was previously done in town. "The results that came back were encouraging. There was an indication that there were enough people in town that would use the service on a regular basis if we charged appropriate rates," recalled Mayor Mills.

Recently, the Ontario government announced plans to help 107 municipalities across the province expand or improve their public transit systems with Ontario's gas tax program, by providing \$364 million in gas tax funding.

"It's obvious that the government sees the importance of having transit," said Deputy Mayor Anderson, noting transit service was one of the main concerns for residents voiced during the election.