## RECOMMENDATION:

(a) That the General Manager of Public Works be authorized and directed to execute, on behalf of the City of Hamilton, certain funding agreements with Metrolinx regarding Smart Commute Hamilton Services, and all necessary associated documents required to give effect to Smart Commute Hamilton programs (as described in Appendix A), to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor;

(b) That funds be made available from the Transportation Demand Management Programs Capital Projects account (4030855820) for Smart Commute Hamilton programs and services;

(c) That staff be directed to report back to the Public Works Committee annually on the funding agreements and all necessary associated documents relating to the Smart Commute Hamilton programs that have been executed by the General Manager of Public Works;

(d) That the Outstanding Business List Item referring to the Employee Emergency Ride Home Program be identified as completed and removed from the Public Works Committee Outstanding Business List.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City has received funding from Metrolinx for the Smart Commute Hamilton initiative since 2008 pursuant to funding agreements between the City and Metrolinx. Previously, Council has authorized the City to enter into these funding agreements. In addition to the annual funding agreements, there are routinely a number of other documents that required execution by the City in order to give effect to the program offered as part of the Smart Commute Initiative. Currently, staff does not have the authority to execute such associated documents. This makes it difficult to administer the program as efficiently as possible. Other Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) cities and regions, including Durham, have sought ongoing delegated authority for Smart Commute agreements to make this process more efficient.

The agreements and associated documents relate to the use of online services such as carpoolzone.ca and the partial funding by Metrolinx of the Smart Commute Hamilton services and programs (as outlined in Appendix A). These agreements are outlined as follows:

1. Metrolinx Annual Funding Agreement with the City of Hamilton for Smart Commute Hamilton services and programs including:
   a. Carpoolzone.ca
   b. Emergencyridehome.ca
   c. Transitzone.ca
   d. Smartcommute.ca
   e. Events and Programming Funding

2. Agreements between the City of Hamilton and employer-partners for the provision of Smart Commute Hamilton services and programs.

3. The extension of the Emergency Ride Home Program to include up to 12 Smart Commute Hamilton employer-partners for a maximum of $400 per year, per employer.

A number of strategic City policies support Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiatives and the benefits of reducing Single-Occupancy Vehicles, particularly during commuting time periods, thereby reducing traffic congestion, emissions and increasing the use of sustainable transportation alternatives. An Employee Emergency Ride Home Program is one of the TDM initiatives that support these policies.

In addition there have been a many notable TDM successes in the past year:

1. During a promotion of Carpoolzone.ca in February, Smart Commute Hamilton grew its number of active carpoolers by 117% to be the fastest growing carpool community in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. This included the promotion of the Emergency Ride Home Program to all City Staff.

2. The one year trial of the Emergency Ride Home Program, approved by council in 2009 (PW09059) and funded from the Transportation Demand Management Programs Capital Projects account (4030855820) included 25 City of Hamilton registrants and cost less than $25.00. Staff is pleased with the trial program as
only one staff person required the use of the funds to address their emergency. The pilot program was established to use up to $700 for this one year trial. The program will now be offered as a part of Smart Commute Hamilton Services.

3. Smart Commute Hamilton was awarded $47,500 from the Ministry of Transportation TDM Grant program to fund its innovative Smart Commute Hamilton Pedestrian Initiative.

Alternatives for Consideration - See Page 6

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:
The General Manager of Public Works will have Council approval to enter into funding agreements with Metrolinx which funds 50% of all Smart Commute Hamilton expenses up to a maximum amount set in the funding agreement for Smart Commute Hamilton services (see Appendix A for a list of services).

In addition, this report addresses the funding of the one-year trial Emergency Ride Home (ERH) program which cost the City under $25.00 with funds available from the Transportation Demand Management capital budget (4030855820). This is in-line with other cities and regions in the GTHA which report similar usage rates, as the program is used for providing rides home to employees without a personal vehicle, only in the event of an emergency.

This report is recommending that the Emergency Ride Home (ERH) Program and Policy become part of the suite of Smart Commute Hamilton services for up to 12 employer partners at a maximum of $400 per employer. The program maximum would be $4800. However, based on consultation with other Smart Commute organizations in the GTA, this program generally has a 10% utilization rate; therefore, the typical amount spent on the program would be less than $500 per year.

Staffing:
There are no additional staffing resources required to facilitate the recommendations.

Legal:
Legal Services will review, advise and approve as to form, the funding agreements between the City of Hamilton and Metrolinx annually, as well as associated documents prior to execution by the General Manager of Public Works.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Smart Commute Hamilton has received funding from Metrolinx since 2008 when it took over responsibility for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Smart Commute Initiative. Generally, a variety of agreements and documents need to be signed at various times throughout the year, which makes it difficult to implement programming because of Council reporting timelines.
The Emergency Ride Home (ERH) Program offers eligible employees, who use sustainable transportation to commute to and from work, a reliable program to facilitate an occasional ride home for emergencies. If employees carpool, vanpool, use transit, walk or cycle to work and an emergency situation arises during the workday; they can utilize this program for a free transit or taxi ride home. The ERH Program can be used for family or personal emergencies or for unscheduled overtime. Such programs have been successfully implemented in other government and private sector organizations. They have proven to be very effective to provide employees with the confidence to utilize alternative methods of transportation to commute to and from work, knowing that transportation can be easily arranged and an emergency can be addressed.

The Regions of Halton, Durham and York and the Town of Markham have similar programs in place. Hamilton Health Sciences has been working on developing a policy for their staff to address emergencies for staff that walk, cycle, take public transit or carpool.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

**Vision 2020:** Smart Commute Services support some of the environmental issues addressed in Vision 20/20. These include:
- Consuming Less Energy
- Improving Air Quality
- Changing employees Mode of Transportation
- Personal Health and Well Being

**Corporate Air Quality and Climate Change Strategic Plan:** The Smart Commute Program will satisfy this plan because it is able to improve air quality by encouraging people to reduce their single occupancy vehicle (SOV) use and using sustainable transportation alternatives.

**City Strategic Commitment:** Smart Commute Hamilton and ERH policies comply with the Corporate Strategic Plan as it is an environmentally sustainable solution to reducing SOV's on City roads, particularly during peak traffic periods. The Smart Commute program promotes a sustainable lifestyle and overall positive effects on the environment. This policy directly relates to the Desired End Result in Section 7.4 as it aims to increase alternative transportation usage in such areas as transit, ridership, walking and cycling. By promoting the Smart Commute Hamilton and ERH program it gives a greater incentive for employees to use sustainable transportation alternatives.

**Public Works Business Plan:** The Smart Commute Hamilton and ERH program addresses the priority for Public Works to be a leader in the greening and stewardship of the city. By promoting Smart Commute Hamilton services and ERH, employees will have more confidence if they are faced with an emergency situation during the workday and they will therefore be more inclined to use sustainable transportation alternatives to travel to and from work on a regular basis.

Smart Commute Hamilton policies, programs and services align with the goals and objectives of the City’s **Transportation Management Plan** (TMP) to implement TDM.
initiatives and reduce vehicles on the roads particularly during peak traffic periods. This can be accomplished through support of sustainable commuting options.

Managers and supervisors would be involved to enforce appropriate human resource policies concerning staff leaving early for an emergency or staff required to stay late for unscheduled overtime.

### RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Human Resources staff was consulted regarding this policy to ensure it is applied and available appropriately across the Corporation. Human Resources support these programs and indicate that these types of employee programs are seen to be “value-added” policies that are innovative and contribute to attracting and retaining employees.

Legal staff was consulted with regard to the process to appropriately handle the review and approval of agreements between the City and Metrolinx. The Legal Department has recommended an efficient procedure for Public Works staff to undertake a review, concerning program agreements and funding agreements between the City of Hamilton and Metrolinx, on an annual basis, as well as associated documents in order that they can be executed by the General Manager of Public Works.

Smart Commute staff at Metrolinx and other GTHA Smart Commute offices, including Durham, were consulted in terms of the implications of providing council consent for the signing of agreements with Metrolinx by the General Manager of Public Works. The results of these consultations confirm the position outlined in the recommendations.

### ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

In order to take advantage of opportunities that present themselves through the Smart Commute Hamilton initiative throughout the year, this report recommends that the General Manager of Public Works be authorized and directed to execute certain funding agreements, on behalf of the City, with Metrolinx for Smart Commute Hamilton services, including those pertaining to the funding of Smart Commute Hamilton programs (as outlined in Appendix A). In addition, Staff is seeking authority for the General Manager of Public Works to execute associated documents, including but not limited to agreements for Smart Commute Hamilton services between the City and employer-partners within the City of Hamilton.

The approval of these recommendations will allow the City to expand its Smart Commute Hamilton services more efficiently by expanding the program to include more employees and citizens. The streamlined process will allow quicker access and fewer barriers to employer and institutional partners who are interested in transportation demand management, sustainable transportation and employee health and wellness.

Staff administering the Smart Commute Hamilton program will work with Legal Services to ensure that future agreements are consistent and reporting requirements between the City and Metrolinx are clearly outlined, in order to ensure that Metrolinx continues to fund 50% of the Smart Commute Hamilton program.
These recommendations improve and streamline the process to have standardized, annual agreements with Metrolinx signed and processed in an efficient manner and not require that they be presented to Committee and Council to authorize the General Manager of Public Works to sign them each time. In addition, this revised agreement approvals process will allow for Smart Commute Hamilton to enter into agreements with employer-partners in a timely fashion to support their programs and initiatives.

In terms of the Emergency Ride Home Program and other Smart Commute services (outlined in Appendix A), research from Smart Commute - Metrolinx cites concerns from employees about not having their automobile at work in the event of an emergency, or unexpected late workdays as reasons for not using sustainable transportation alternatives. ERH programs alleviate these concerns by providing the employees with the security of knowing that a ride will be available in the event of an emergency. This program also promotes an active lifestyle by getting people out of their single occupancy vehicle (SOV) and into more sustainable modes of transportation. By supporting the use of sustainable transportation, ERH helps to achieve the City's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) objectives.

The direct cost of offering this service tends to be low because of infrequent use. However, the benefits of this service are very high. This program promotes using sustainable transportation alternatives which would decrease pollution from SOV’s and improve the air quality within the city. It is one of the easiest and least expensive benefits an employer can offer to its employees and promote TDM initiatives. Costs incurred by the City of Hamilton will include minimal program administration and the costs of subsidizing the ERH trips. Current research from Smart Commute suggests that there is approximately 1 ride per every 600 employees and the average cost per ride is $38.70. Staff recommends that a maximum of $400 per employer, per year (up to 12 employers) be budgeted for this program. The research also indicates that for businesses that have ERH programs, very few trips are actually taken, however, the employees have the confidence that they can make use of the program if required. Funding is available in the Transportation Demand Management capital account (4030855820) for TDM initiatives of this nature. In addition, Metrolinx, through the funding agreement with the City, funds 50% of these activities.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

An alternative to these recommendations is not to grant the General Manager of Public Works the authority to sign funding agreements with Metrolinx pertaining to Smart Commute Hamilton services (outlined in Appendix A). This would maintain the current system of seeking council approval every time an agreement needs to be signed pertaining to Smart Commute Hamilton services. Staff does not recommend this option as it acts as a barrier to establishing relationships with new employers and expanding the Smart Commute Hamilton Transportation Demand Management mandate. It also slows down the process to obtain 50% funding from Metrolinx required to continue to grow and develop the program.

**Skilled, Innovative & Respectful Organization**
- A culture of excellence
- A skilled, adaptive and diverse workforce, i.e. more flexible staff
- An enabling work environment - respectful culture, well-being and safety, effective communication
- Council and SMT are recognized for their leadership and integrity

**Financial Sustainability**
- Financially Sustainable City by 2020
- Effective and sustainable Growth Management
- Address infrastructure deficiencies and unfunded liabilities

**Intergovernmental Relationships**
- Acquire greater share of Provincial and Federal grants (including those that meet specific needs)
- Maintain effective relationships with other public agencies

**Growing Our Economy**
- Competitive business environment
- A skilled and creative labour pool that supports new employers
- An improved customer service

**Social Development**
- Residents in need have access to adequate support services
- People participate in all aspects of community life without barriers or stigma

**Environmental Stewardship**
- Natural resources are protected and enhanced
- Reduced impact of City activities on the environment
- Aspiring to the highest environmental standards

**Healthy Community**
- Plan and manage the built environment
- An engaged Citizenry

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**APPENDICES / SCHEDULES**

Appendix A - Smart Commute Hamilton Services Overview
APPENDIX A: Smart Commute Hamilton Services Overview

Improve Employee Wellness, Productivity, Job Satisfaction
Active transportation modes such as cycling, walking and transit, have been shown to improve health and wellness through encouraging weight loss, improving cardiovascular fitness and improving mood. This impacts your workplace by increasing employee productivity and morale, while decreasing absenteeism. In recent surveys; 66% of employees feel that their commute effects their job satisfaction.

Smart Commute Employer Services
The following list outlines a portion of the services Smart Commute Hamilton offers to members:

**Travel Demand Analysis**
Smart Commute analyses employee travel demand through spatial analysis and mapping as well as behavioural surveys. We set up indicators and help you to monitor employee progress, according to the customized travel demand plan we provide.

**Carpooling & Vanpooling**
CarpoolZone.ca provides a profiling and ride matching service which matches your employees with other employees and Carpool Zone users to form a best match. Bike and walk pooling are available through other means and promotions using emails and ride board matching.

**Transit Services**
TransitZone.ca provides employers with a discounted transit pass program for employees. The City of Hamilton matches employer contributions up to 20%. If the employer chooses to subsidize employee passes by 20%, then the employee will receive a 40% discount. Transit route planning for employees is also available as part of the customized Smart Commute Travel Plan for workplaces. In addition, we offer free transit days during special events.

Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.
Values: Honesty, Accountability, Innovation, Leadership, Respect, Excellence, Teamwork
Emergency Ride Home (ERH) and Active Transportation

EmergencyRideHome.ca provides employees with commuter insurance when they cycle, walk, take transit or carpool to work. In the event of an emergency, the ERH program is available to sustainable commuters and will reimburse a taxi ride home (at the employer’s cost), so that they can act quickly.

Active Transportation and Employee Wellbeing

The goals of Smart Commute are to reduce congestion and improve air quality, in order to improve employee health and wellbeing. Cycling and Walking help achieve these goals and provide the further benefit of reducing obesity and heart disease.

Secure Bike Parking is an important consideration for employees riding to work, helping to protect their transportation investment. Smart Commute can help employers design these facilities, an example of which can be found on our website.

Bike to Work Initiatives give employees the chance to become familiar with bike routes to their workplace. Smart Commute provides online route maps and helps employers organize events to promote cycling to the workplace. The official bike to work day website will promote events at your workplace. In addition, these events provide new cyclists with an opportunity to meet seasoned veterans, have fun and learn safe cycling tips.

Walk to Work Initiatives encourage individuals to meet with their co-workers, walk and be active. They also recognize the effort of walkers, educate walkers about the health benefits of walking and create safe walking routes to work. To learn more about Walk to Work Days visit http://www.smartcommute.ca/hamilton/walk and view some walking maps.

A Cycling and Walking Analysis will be completed for your workplace to determine routes and safe corridors. It will also determine the percentage of your employees that are located within walking, cycling and transit range, with estimated travel times.

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Establishing a Health and Wellness Committee; Smart Commute can offer toolkits and expertise in employee engagement to ensure employees remain involved, active participants in your wellness program.

Membership in the Transportation Management Association (TMA)
The Hamilton TMA allows you to share best practices with other employers and groups, and connects your company to the Ontario Government/Metrolinx initiative (www.smartcommute.ca).

Events and Contests
These are held regularly throughout the year. In the past, prizes have included iPods, netbook computers and cycling gear to make active commuting safer and easier. Employers are able to support, promote and run events while Smart Commute handles the administration and cost of the events and prizes.

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