

## Caledon Community Services receives five-year transportation grant from MTO

Written By JASEN OBERMEYER

Caledon has been approved by Ontario's Ministry of Transportation for up to \$500,000 over five year for transportation funds.

This is the result of a local transit project proposed by Caledon Community Services, with the support from the Town.

"We're pleased to be part of the broader transportation plan being developed by the Town of Caledon", says Monty Laskin, CEO of Caledon Community Services (CCS). "While limited in scope and certainly not a robust public transportation service, this five-year program will be a lifeline for hundreds of people across Caledon. It will provide much-needed support connecting people to employment, community services and to other adjacent transit services."

CCS two years ago piloted a specialized transportation for Caledon residents between the ages of 8 and 59. The new program will build upon CCS' transportation services which is usually reserved for seniors and those unable to drive due to a disability. This new program will address some of the many transportation gaps identified by passengers during the two-year pilot period.

"I congratulate Caledon Community Services on receiving funding, it's great news and will help fill some gaps in transit demand in Caledon," says Mayor Allan Thompson. "Alternative transportation options like this one dovetail with Caledon's Transportation Master Plan currently gathering input and feedback from the public."

Mr. Laskin added that Mayor Thompson was on board from the beginning, being a strong supporter to make this happen. "We approached him when the opportunity became available and indicated that we were up against dozens of other municipalities across the province. No question about it, he was all in."

"I know how difficult it is to maintain our vital transportation services. It's great to see our organization working closely with the Mayor and Town of Caledon staff in identifying the key areas in our community needing transportation support," says Bill Parnaby, the Chair of CCS. "A sound business case, great advocacy and effective partnership won the day here. Together we're bringing this important service to our community."

This expanded transportation program will provide immediate support to young people and to people needing to get to work, secondary education and to community programs and events.

"Accessible and affordable transit in Caledon is an enormous challenge because of the large geographic expanse and relatively small but growing population," noted Mr. Laskin.

This funding enables CCS to add a new bus to its fleet and hire a new driver. More information on routes, destinations and times of operation will be released in the coming weeks as the program rolls out.