

King, York, enjoy gas tax funding

The Ontario government is providing more than \$379.5 million to help 107 municipalities operate and improve local transit. The funding is being delivered through the gas tax program and can be used to extend service hours, buy transit vehicles, add routes, improve accessibility or upgrade infrastructure. "Public transit is a key driver of economic growth in Ontario, helping people get to where they need to go, whether it is to work, school, or run errands," said local MPP Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. "As more people return to public transit, our government is providing municipalities with the funding they need to accommodate growing ridership, while ensuring they can continue to deliver safe and reliable transit service for people in their communities. Funding for the gas tax program is determined by the number of litres of gasoline sold in the province during the previous year. Municipalities that support public transit services in their community receive two cents per litre of provincial gas tax revenue collected.

King had received \$778,000 in funding and this new measure will bring King's share up to \$811,000. "Providing safe, reliable and connected public transit contributes to a sustainable future and to a healthy economy. The gas tax funding from the Province of Ontario, delivered on behalf of the Region's municipalities by York Region, will help enhance service for King residents who use the YRT to travel in and out of York Region, as well as benefiting residents throughout the region," said King Mayor Steve Pellegrini. To make up for reduced gas sales due to ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's gas tax program includes one-time additional funding of \$80 million to help ensure municipalities can continue to support their transit systems. "Once again through the gas tax program the government has demonstrated its support for public transit," said Kelly Paleczny, Chair of the Ontario Public Transit Association. "We are very thankful for the funding that will help local transit systems continue to operate and provide high levels of service to the more than one million Ontarians who rely on transit every day. The 2022-23 gas tax program will support public transit in 144 communities in 107 municipalities across the province, representing more than 92 per cent of all Ontarians. The provincial and federal governments are providing up to \$2.65 billion through the Safe Restart Agreement to support municipal transit systems in response to COVID-19. Ontario is developing regional plans that will help build a better transportation system across the province. The province has released four draft regional transportation plans for Northern Ontario, southwestern Ontario, the Greater Golden Horseshoe and eastern Ontario. York Region is home to over 1.1 million people and needs a modern and reliable public transit network to ensure people can get where they need to go every day. That is why we are happy to see the more than \$17 million in funding from the province to York Region through the gas tax program. This funding will provide enormous benefits to our community, including helping people utilize transit and grow our economy," added York Chair and CEO Wayne Emmerson.