



NEWS RELEASE

June 9, 2020

The Atmospheric Fund awards grant to Durham Region Transit for electric bus project

WHITBY, ON – Since 2017 Durham Region Transit (DRT) has been actively engaged in investigating transit electrification innovation opportunities throughout the Region. In November 2019 Durham Region Council committed \$10.1 million in federal gas tax funding towards DRT's first battery electric buses and charging infrastructure as a pilot project to inform the transition of the Region's transit fleet to zero emission buses over the next ten years. This project will be an important step to implement the Durham Community Energy Plan and will demonstrate the Region's position as a leader in reducing GHG emissions.

On May 21, 2020, The Atmospheric Fund (TAF) Board of Directors approved grant funding for the *Scaling-up to Zero Emissions Transit in the Region of Durham* proposal. TAF funding will specifically support DRT in advancing key analysis and design work for the electric bus project, including specifications for the buses and charging infrastructure, and key project components such as training, re-tooling, software and performance monitoring. These are essential steps to support procurement of the vehicles in 2021 and to prepare for their arrival in 2022.

"TAF is supporting Durham Region Transit's electrification initiative because it's a key route to zero carbon cities and has many local benefits, including job creation and improved health," says Julia Langer, CEO, The Atmospheric Fund. "Let's all hop on the electric bus!"

Submitted in partnership with Oshawa Power and Utilities Corporation (OPUC), as part of the project DRT will be examining infrastructure requirements and business model best practices, as well as determining specifications for the design, build, finance, operation and maintenance of electric bus charging solutions and associated grid upgrades at its Oshawa garage location.

"As a community-minded organization, it's important that we enable leading energy projects like this," says Ivano Labricciosa, President and CEO of the OPUC group of companies. "DRT's efforts will lead to transformative carbon reductions and service improvements across Durham, making us a very proud collaborator and project partner."

The project will also help inform the design of a new bus depot with the capability to support a 100 per cent zero emission fleet, with design work on the new depot expected to begin in 2021. To achieve this

outcome, DRT will gather information while piloting eight battery electric buses and charging technologies. The project will enable DRT to acquire the necessary expertise and data to plan the effective transition of the fleet to zero-emission technologies, and to design its new bus depot to include zero-emission buses.

“Durham Region Transit is excited to be able to explore electric technology options, including battery electric and hybrids, for future fleet acquisitions,” says Bill Holmes, General Manager of Durham Region Transit. “We are grateful for the funding provided by TAF and are eager to move forward with informing our plans for a zero-emission fleet at DRT.”

The total TAF grant value is approximately \$195,000 over two years to support project management requirements for the project and is in addition to the previously announced Region of Durham contribution from the federal gas tax funding, as part of the Region’s commitment to sustainability and addressing the impacts of climate change.

To learn more about Durham’s Community Energy plan, click [here](#).

To learn more about The Atmospheric Fund, visit taf.ca.

To learn more about Oshawa Power and Utilities Corporation, visit opuc.on.ca.

– 30 –

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