October 29, 2013

Rose Caterini, City Clerk
c/o City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario
L8N 3T4

Dear Ms. Caterini:

SUBJECT: ENDORSEMENT OF STAFF RESPONSE FOR THE NIAGARA TO GREATER TORONTO AREA CORRIDOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY

The Council of the Corporation of the City of Burlington, at its meeting held on Monday October 15, 2013 approved the following recommendation:

Endorse transportation services department report TS-17-13 as the City of Burlington's response to the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario on the final Niagara to Greater Toronto Area Transportation Development Strategy; and

Reaffirm the City of Burlington's opposition to any new transportation corridor crossing the Niagara Escarpment and the Green Belt area in Burlington; and

Direct the City Clerk to forward a copy of transportation services department report TS-17-13 and Council's resolution to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, Halton Region, the Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Milton, the Town of Oakville, and the City of Hamilton for their information.

Please find enclosed Report TS-17-13. If you have any questions with reference to the above, please contact Bruce Zvaniga, Director of Transportation Services at 905-335-7600 ext. 7976.

Yours truly,

Gina van den Burg
Committee Clerk

cc: Bruce Zvaniga, Director of Transportation Services
Transportation Services Department

TO: Development and Infrastructure Committee

SUBJECT: Niagara to Greater Toronto Area Corridor Planning Environmental Assessment Study Final Transportation Development Strategy

Report Number: TS-17-13         File Number(s): 770-01-01

Report Date: September 13, 2013  Ward(s) Affected: 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 □ 6 □ All ☑

Date to Committee: September 30, 2013       Date to Council: October 15, 2013

Recommendation: Endorse transportation services department report TS-17-13 as the City of Burlington’s response to the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario on the final Niagara to Greater Toronto Area Transportation Development Strategy; and,

Reaffirm the City of Burlington’s opposition to any new transportation corridor crossing the Niagara Escarpment and the Green Belt area in Burlington; and,

Direct the City Clerk to forward a copy of transportation services department report TS-17-13 and Council’s resolution to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, Halton Region, the Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Milton, the Town of Oakville, and the City of Hamilton for their information.

Purpose:
☑ Address goal or action in strategic plan
☐ Establish new or revised policy or service standard
☐ Respond to legislation
☐ Respond to staff direction
☐ Address other area of responsibility

Reference to Strategic Plan:
☑ Vibrant Neighbourhoods        ☐ Prosperity
☐ Excellence in Government        ☐ N/A

Background: On September 4, 2013, the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) released for a 60-day review period the final Transportation Development Strategy for the Niagara to Greater Toronto Area Corridor Planning Environmental Assessment (EA) Study ("study") documenting the work undertaken in Phase 1 of the EA.
MTO initiated Phase 1 of the NGTA study in December 2006 to examine transportation problems, opportunities and a range of transportation alternatives to the year 2031 through the Niagara Peninsula to the Greater Toronto Area.


Discussion:

This report requests Council to endorse a response to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) on the final (September 4, 2013) Transportation Development Strategy for the Niagara to Greater Toronto Area (NGTA) Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment (EA) Study.

MTO’s approach to the EA has been to use a building block framework as follows:

1. Optimize existing networks (all modes of transportation)
2. New/expanded non-roadway infrastructure (transit, rail, air, marine)
3. Widen/improve existing roads and highways
4. Determine new transportation corridors

In consideration of the previous reports and the draft study results, Council has endorsed this approach and supported the recommendations contained in the MTO study for the level 1, 2 and 3 building blocks. Council and the community-at-large in Burlington expressed opposition to the development of a new transportation crossing the Niagara Escarpment in Burlington.

In response to comments received on the March 2011 draft study recommendations, MTO undertook additional detailed analysis of the highway expansion alternatives (both level 3 and 4) in each of the three geographic areas. Burlington is located in the study’s west area.

This analysis and collaboration with the various stakeholders has resulted in the final study recommendations that include for the west area:

- 407 ETR Burlington/Oakville – widen by two lanes between the Freeman interchange and Highway 403 interchange in Oakville
- QEW Burlington/Hamilton – widen by two HOV lanes from the Freeman Interchange over the Burlington Bay Skyway to the Red Hill Valley Parkway interchange; and,
• Highway 403 Hamilton - widen by two lanes from King Street/Main Street to Jerseyville;
• Highway 6 Hamilton – widen by two lanes between Hamilton Airport and Highway 403
• Highway 403 Oakville/Mississauga – widen by three lanes from the Ford Plant (QEW) to 407 ETR

In addition, MTO has recommended a future study with a longer planning horizon and expanded study area be conducted to address the post-2031 needs. The scope of the study is still to be determined and will be developed in consultation with municipalities and stakeholder groups.

Response to Ministry of Transportation

1. The City of Burlington supports the recommendations contained in the final Transportation Development Strategy for the Niagara to Greater Toronto Area Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment Study report dated September 2013.

2. The City of Burlington is anxious to see the Province of Ontario move forward as soon as possible with the necessary investment in the improvements identified as building blocks 1 and 2.

3. In support of the study’s Level 1 recommendations, the city specifically requests that the Ministry undertake an immediate review of all current design standards and practices for provincial roadways in urban areas to ensure that they support a balanced approach to including and funding active transportation infrastructure, and accommodating local transit, within the Ministry road rights-of-way.

4. The City of Burlington expects to be included as a primary stakeholder in the development of the strategy and scope of any future study to address the transportation needs of the West Area as identified in the study’s Highway Expansion recommendations.

Financial Matters:

At its meeting on July 15, 2010, in consideration of Report E-58-10, Council approved funding of $100,000 from the Tax Stabilization Reserve Fund for retaining consulting and/or legal services to assist in assessing the draft Transportation Development Strategy. Gowlings LLP and Sam Schwartz Engineering were retained to assist in a review of the draft Transportation Development Strategy report. Spending on that assignment was within the approved funding.

The review of the final Transportation Development Strategy did not require any external resources.
Other Resource Impacts

This matter has consumed significant staff hours. Given the importance and complexity of this file, the Director of Transportation Services was directly assigned to this matter. In addition, the General Manager of Development and Infrastructure, the City Solicitor, a Planner, and the Manager of Public Affairs devoted significant time to ensuring the City of Burlington's interests are protected and that residents are informed of the project status and of opportunities to participate in the Provincial study.

Environmental Matters:

The NGTA Transportation Development Strategy is a component of Phase 1 of the MTO Planning and Environmental Assessment Study. The planning is in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act.

Transportation corridors are critically to the economic vitality and sustainability of the community. Assessing the nature, design and location of the alternatives ensures that any harmful environmental impacts are identified and addressed appropriately.

Communication Matters:

Staff will communicate Council’s views and decisions to the MTO. Information on this study is available on the Ministry of Transportations' project website (www.niagara-gta.com), the City of Burlington website (www.burlington.ca) and on the Region of Halton website (www.halton.ca).

Persons interested in the study are encouraged to review the study documents and express their comments directly to the Ministry of Transportation during the 60-day comment period ending November 4, 2013.

Conclusion:

In their final Transportation Development Strategy for the Niagara to Greater Toronto Area Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment study, the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario has addressed the comments made regarding the March 2011 draft by the City of Burlington in Report TS-25-11.

The improvements to the transportation system through optimization of existing networks, expansion and improvements to non-road infrastructure and the targeted highway expansion will become increasingly important in the future. The economic competitiveness of the NGTA depends upon an effective and efficient transportation network.
Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by Bruce Zvaniga

Bruce Zvaniga, P.Eng.
Director, Transportation Services
(905) 335-7671 x7976

Appendices:

A. MTO Niagara to GTA Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment Study: Transportation Development Strategy Executive Summary (September 2013)

Notifications:

(after Council decision)

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Mailing or E-mail Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mitch Zamojc</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Mitch.Zamojc@halton.ca">Mitch.Zamojc@halton.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Region of Halton</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>John Slobodzian</td>
<td><a href="mailto:John.Slobodzian@ontario.ca">John.Slobodzian@ontario.ca</a></td>
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Approvals:

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<th>Original signed by Bruce Zvaniga</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Original signed by Scott Stewart</th>
<th>Original signed by Jeff Fielding</th>
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<tr>
<td>*Department Head</td>
<td>City Treasurer</td>
<td>General Manager</td>
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To be completed by the Clerks Department

Committee Disposition & Comments

01-Approved 02-Not Approved 03-Amended 04-Referred 06-Received & Filed 07-Withdrawn

Council Disposition & Comments

01-Approved 02-Not Approved 03-Amended 04-Referred 06-Received & Filed 07-Withdrawn