To: Chair Members  
Public Works Committee

From: Scott Stewart, C.E.T.  
General Manager  
Public Works Department  

Telephone: 905 546-2313  
Facsimile: 905 546-4481  
E-mail: sstewart@hamilton.ca

Date: September 8, 2008

Re: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study - Public Consultation Update - PW08043b - (City Wide)

Council Direction:

Staff were to report back to Public Works Committee in regards to the results of an aggressive public consultation program for the Rapid Transit initiative in Hamilton.

Information:

Background

In June 2007, the Province of Ontario released their MoveOntario 2020 plan. This plan, which included the identification of two City of Hamilton corridors, is a $17.5 billion plan for rapid transit in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

This announcement allowed Hamilton to accelerate rapid transit planning and to seriously consider Light Rail Transit (LRT).

In November 2007, the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study (RTFS) was initiated. This study identified that either Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or LRT could be implemented on the A-Line and B-Line, but that there were some constraints that required further investigation. Staff is continuing with Phase 2 of the Rapid Transit Feasibility study to address some of the constraints and opportunities, in conjunction with the undertaking of aggressive public consultation to gauge the public’s support for the rapid transit initiative.

Previously, two staff reports (PW08043 presented to Public Work Committee on April 14, 2008 and PW08043a presented to Public Works Committee on June 16, 2008) provided additional background on the studies, plans and policies that both support and impact rapid transit in Hamilton, including the Transportation Master Plan, MoveOntario 2020, GRIDS, the Public Works Strategic Plan, the findings of the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study, and the initial results of public consultation.
This information update has been written to provide Council with an update of what staff has been hearing from the public since the endorsement of PW08043a on June 25, 2008. A summary of the survey results is attached as Appendix A to this report.

To date, staff has heard from more than 1600 people, representing all City wards, with 94% supporting rapid transit of some kind. This can be further broken down as follows:
- 66% support for LRT;
- 8% support for BRT; and
- 20% support for either mode.

Staff will report back to Public Works Committee in October 2008, following the release of the Draft Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan and Investment Strategy and to report on the results of Phase 2 of the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study. The next few months are significant in terms of the process that Metrolinx is following for the Regional Transportation Plan and Investment Strategy. These documents will be released in late September (delayed from July 2008) and their first 5-year Capital Budget will be released in November.

City of Hamilton staff have been working closely with Metrolinx staff through the Quick Wins projects, development and release of their Green and White Papers, which form the basis of the Regional Transportation Plan, their Investment Strategy and their Capital Budget.

Public Consultation

Since April 2008, with the release of the agenda for the first Public Works Committee meeting that dealt with the issue of rapid transit in Hamilton, there has been significant interest in the community regarding this initiative. In order to maintain this momentum and to provide Council with the public’s opinion on the rapid transit initiative, staff has been aggressive in attempting to reach out to all residents of the City of Hamilton and solicit their input. Staff has been able to obtain significant community input (over 1300 responses to a rapid transit initiative survey over the month of July, and 1600 responses in total since May 2008) through radio and newspaper advertisements, making surveys available on-line and at public offices, municipal service centres and other public facilities. In addition, staff attendance at community events and fairs, “lunch and learn” sessions for City of Hamilton staff and a daytime public information centre has garnered additional attention and public input into the project.

A summary of what staff has been hearing from the public is attached as Appendix A, including residents’ views on the funding of a rapid transit system and the level of support the respondents believe should be provided from other levels of government.

Although the public consultation process will continue, only comments received by the City by August 11, 2008 have been included in this update (due to internal circulation deadlines). It should be noted that, through the public consultation process, all wards have been represented either through attendance at the public sessions and/or completion of the comment sheets or survey. The survey results, stakeholder letters, comments received at the public sessions and community events and continued review of media/internet blogs all indicate that the overall public opinion in regards to the Rapid
Transit initiative is that of support for a rapid transit system (94%) and more specifically, the public supports the idea of rapid transit being provided in utilizing LRT technology.

There is overwhelming support for Light Rail Transit (66%) over Bus Rapid Transit (8%). Of those that commented, 20% (328 residents) believed that either mode would be acceptable.

There has been a lot of interest in the community since initial discussions regarding Rapid Transit began in April 2008, following the release of the Public Works Committee agenda that included staff report PW08043. Since that time, as a result of the media coverage and community interest, excitement for the initiative has grown and staff have been able to keep the momentum high through the execution of an aggressive communications plan. Staff has been able to maintain an excitement in the community in regards to this initiative and have kept rapid transit at the forefront of discussions.

Typically, public consultation over the summer months is not desirable, given the change in daily routines for the average person, however, the importance of ensuring that the public had the opportunity to participate in the rapid transit initiative during this critical decision making stage required staff to be creative in reaching out to the public to garner their input. The goal was to reach as many citizens as possible, while ensuring that the input process was simple and efficient. In order to achieve this, staff re-vamped the on-line survey to make it user friendly and provided better access to the survey, for those that do not have access to the internet, at Hamilton Public Library branches, Municipal Service Centres, Councillors’ Offices, Mayor’s Office, Clerks Office, HSR ticket office/GO Station.

Critical to ensuring a successful response to these surveys was getting the message out to the public that the Rapid Transit Study Team and City Council wanted to know their opinion. Radio advertisements regarding the request for public input were broadcast on CHML and Y108 between July 7 and July 18, 2008 and on K-lite FM between July 8 and July 18, 2008 (a total of 120 radio commercials during this time frame). During this same time period, print advertisements were placed in the Hamilton Spectator on July 7, July 14 and July 18, 2008 and in all 6 community (Brabant) newspapers on July 11 and July 18, 2008 advising the public on how they can provide their input.

In addition, the local media also published articles on the Rapid Transit initiative on July 11, 2008 in all 6 community (Brabant) newspapers and on July 15, 2008 in the Hamilton Spectator. Radio interviews with Rapid Transit Study Team staff occurred on July 8, 2008 on CHML (Bob & Shiona Show) and on K-lite FM, as part of their news programming, on July 7 and July 8, 2008.

The Rapid Transit Study Team has also been active in reaching out to the community through attending various community organized events. While in attendance at these events, staff handed out brochures regarding rapid transit, provided hard copies of the survey and were available to answer questions on the initiative. These events include the Landsdale Neighbourhood Association’s “Summer in the Park” event that took place on July 6, 2008 at JC Beemer Park and the Barton Village Business Improvement Association (BIA) First Annual Festival on July 19 and July 20, 2008 at Woodlands Park. Staff will also be attending the University of McMaster “Clubfest” in September...
2008 and other fall festivals to continue to discuss the rapid transit initiative, answer questions and hand-out brochures and surveys.

Staff also worked with Councillors to use their existing communication channels to help spread the word about the rapid transit initiative.

Lunch & Learn sessions were held to educate City staff on the initiative on Thursday, July 24th at 330 Wentworth Street North and on Friday, July 25th on the rooftop of Jackson Square. A downtown lunch time public information centre was also held on Monday, July 28th, 2008 to capture downtown commuters who are potential riders of a rapid transit system, many of whom presently commute to work using a single occupancy vehicle.

Staff has also continued consultation with stakeholders within the community, some which have been identified as key nodes in the City. Most recently, staff has met with representatives of the Hamilton Halton Home Builders’ Association, Lime Ridge Mall, Eastgate Square (also representing Centre Mall), Jackson Square, St. Joseph’s Health Care and Hamilton Association of Business Improvement Areas (HABIA). All stakeholders fully support the implementation of a rapid transit system, supporting LRT over BRT and are anxious to continue discussions, particularly as they relate to route selection and station location/design. Letters from the stakeholders (received by August 11, 2008) are included in Appendix B.

Over the coming months, staff have meeting dates set with McMaster University, Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, St. Joseph’s Healthcare, and are pursuing opportunities to present to Mohawk College, Hamilton Health Sciences, additional community groups, special interest groups and the business community (an advertisement inviting businesses to contact Rapid Transit Team staff will appear in BIZ Magazine’s fall issue). Staff has indicated to the public that comments on Rapid Transit are always welcome either through the project website www.hamilton.ca/rapid-transit, direct project e-mail rapidtransit@hamilton.ca or in person. Staff have comprised an extensive mailing list of the general public and stakeholders and will provide a Newsletter Update (Fall 2008) following Council’s direction. Rapid Transit Study Team contact information, study background and a route corridor map have also been included in the September 2008 HSR Bus News and a profile on Rapid Transit will appear as part of the Perspective Hamilton publication, in conjunction with the Economic Development Office. This publication will be provided to every Hamilton household and will be an insert in the Globe & Mail on October 28, 2008.

A chronology of key dates and events is detailed in Table 1 of this information update.

In addition, consultation on the Rapid Transit Initiative has included the following City Departments, who are in support of this work:

- Public Works (Transit, Capital Planning & Implementation, Operations & Maintenance)
- Planning and Economic Development (Development Planning, Community Planning, Downtown and Community Renewal, Strategic Services and Special Projects, Real Estate, Parking and By-law Services)

Public Works has continued to work collaboratively with Planning and Economic Development in this process as the project is of true importance to the City as a whole.
with great economic potential and has implications to the Nodes and Corridors Policies of the Official Plan, Zoning By-laws and the Urban Structure Plan. There will also be a role for Public Health Services to play, especially in the area of improved air quality as a result of rapid transit implementation. The economic review has strengthened the need for this continued collaboration between internal City departments, stakeholders and the general public. To compliment this work, another round of public consultation is planned in order to continue collecting public opinion and responding to citizen inquiries.

Table 1: Chronology of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Master Plan (TMP)</td>
<td>February 2007</td>
<td>- Rapid Transit in the form of BRT endorsed by Council along three (3) City of Hamilton Corridors with long term vision of LRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoveOntario 2020 Plan</td>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>- $17.5 billion plan for Rapid Transit in the GTHA, including two (2) corridors in Hamilton that had previously been identified in the TMP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Transit Feasibility Study (RTFS) (Phase 1)</td>
<td>November 2007 - May 2008</td>
<td>- Study to investigate the major considerations in route selection, technology (LRT or BRT) and the identification of opportunities and constraints of each type of system.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Discussions with the Province (Metrolinx) in regards to MoveOntario 2020 and what this means for Hamilton.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Works Committee / Council</td>
<td>April 14 / April 25 2008</td>
<td>- Staff Report PW08043 endorsed.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Recommendation approved to release findings of the RTFS to the public and initiate public consultation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Consultation (Phase 1)</td>
<td>April - June 2008</td>
<td>- Participation in Hamilton Light Rail Workshop on May 1.</td>
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<td>- Public Information Centres (PICs) held May 6 and May 8.</td>
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<td>- Extensive media coverage (print, radio and TV)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Stakeholder consultation (Chamber of Commerce, Hamilton Burlington Real Estate Association, BIA’s, Hamilton International Airport etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works Committee / Council</td>
<td>June 16 / June 25 2008</td>
<td>- Staff Report PW08043a endorsed.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Recommendation to continue with Phase 2 of the RTFS with focus on LRT, continued public consultation and continued communication with Metrolinx in regards to their proposed 5-year Capital Budget (Nov 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Transit Feasibility Study (Phase 2)</td>
<td>June – Ongoing</td>
<td>- Study to investigate alternatives to using James Mountain Road, focus on LRT, project priorities and staging.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Preliminary economic review of other municipalities and system development research.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Discussions with the Province (Metrolinx) in regards to MoveOntario 2020 and what this means for Hamilton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Consultation (Phase 2)</td>
<td>June – Ongoing</td>
<td>- Extensive outreach using the media for solicitation of public input (print and radio); surveys made available online, and at public offices, municipal service centres and public facilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- June 2008 Newsletter Update to mailing list</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Lunch &amp; Learn Sessions (July 24 &amp; July 25)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Lunch Public Information Sessions (July 28)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Attendance at Community Events and Fairs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Stakeholder consultation (HHHBA, Eastgate Square, Lime Ridge Mall, St. Joseph’s Health Care, BIA’s, Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Continued media coverage (print, radio, TV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works Committee / Council</td>
<td>September 15/ September 24 2008</td>
<td>TODAY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next Steps

It is expected that Metrolinx will release its Draft Regional Transportation Plan and Investment Strategy on September 26, 2008. These documents will outline potential revenue sources and financial tools to deliver the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) recommendations, maintain existing transportation infrastructure, and support the operating costs of current and future transit services. Staff will continue to work closely with Metrolinx to ensure that the City of Hamilton is included in these plans and any ongoing discussions, particularly as it relates to rapid transit in Hamilton.

Staff will report back to the Public Works Committee in fall 2008 to outline the impacts of the RTP and with recommendations on how to proceed in regards to rapid transit in Hamilton.

Scott Stewart, C.E.T.
General Manager
Public Works Department
Appendix A – Survey Results

Question 1:
If you do support a rapid transit system, which mode would you prefer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transit Mode</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Bus Only</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Rail Only</td>
<td>1059</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Either One</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1605</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rapid Transit Mode Preference

- Rapid Bus Only: 8%
- Light Rail Only: 67%
- Either One: 20%
- Neither: 5%
Question 2:
If you support LRT, BRT or Both, what was your selection based on? Please check all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th># of Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Impact</td>
<td>1147</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential to Attract New Ridership</td>
<td>1079</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Economic Benefit</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Cost</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Cycle Analysis</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Cost</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Cost</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 3:
Would you be in favour of implementing additional rapid transit routes in the future, once the recommended routes are established?

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<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1311</td>
<td>(90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>(4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public In Favour of Additional Routes

91%

4% 5%

Question 4:
If Metrolinx and/or the federal government will support a maximum of 75% of capital costs for rapid transit in Hamilton, will you still support the initiative?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support for</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td>1312  (90%)</td>
<td>66  (4%)</td>
<td>75  (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66%</td>
<td>1181  (81%)</td>
<td>135 (9%)</td>
<td>137  (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>948   (65%)</td>
<td>265 (18%)</td>
<td>240  (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>500   (34%)</td>
<td>588 (40%)</td>
<td>365  (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>398   (27%)</td>
<td>747 (51%)</td>
<td>308  (27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rapid Transit Support Based on Funding
Question 5: Rapid Transit Type Preference by Ward

Rapid Transit Preference by Ward

Legend:
- Light Rail Only
- Rapid Bus Only
- Either One
- Neither

Map showing Rapid Transit Type Preference by Ward with various pie charts indicating the percentage preference for each option in different wards.
Appendix B – Stakeholder Correspondence

His Worship Mayor Fred Eisenberger & Members of Council
Hamilton City Centre
77 James Street North, Suite 230
Hamilton, ON L8R 2K3

May 14, 2008

Dear Mayor Fred:

On behalf of the REALTORS® Association of Hamilton-Burlington (RAHB) and our 2400 members we are writing to express our full support for the development of light rail transit (LTR) in Hamilton.

We understand that some in our community have voiced concern over the potential costs of light rail over bus rapid transit (BRT). However, we are part of a larger group of citizens who believe that Hamilton has the potential to become a great city.

In order to achieve this goal we need to be forward thinking in our plans for the future, and we believe that light rail is one of the best ways to achieve many of the goals of the city. These include, but are not limited to: revitalization of the downtown core, intensification along main corridors, increased economic development and broadening of the tax base.

As an association, RAHB has adopted a number of guiding principles to demonstrate the commitment of the real estate profession to improve quality of life by supporting policies that encourage economic vitality, provide housing opportunities, preserve the environment, protect property owners and build community. Light rail transit will help achieve many of these principles.

We urge you to move forward with the decision to develop light rail transit (LTR) in Hamilton as the best option for the future of this city.

We are looking forward to your response.

Sincerely,
REALTORS® Association of Hamilton-Burlington

Ann Cosens
2008 President

John Vail
2008 Government Relations Chair

CC: Jillian Stephen, Manager Strategic Planning – Capital Planning and Implementation Division
Lisa Zinkewich, Senior Project Manager for Rapid Transit
Lisa Zinkewich  
Capital Planning & Implementation  
Public Works  
City of Hamilton  
Suite 350 77 James Street North  
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 2K3

Dear Lisa Zinkewich:

Re: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study

Clean Air Hamilton is a multi-stakeholder group dedicated to improving air quality in Hamilton. We are committed to improving the health impacts due to poor air quality and the quality of life for the citizens of our city. We encourage and support the development of environmentally sound practices through science-based decision-making and the adoption of management plans which are consistent with sustainable development.

One major source of local air pollutants in Hamilton are emissions from transportation sources (i.e., cars and trucks). Over the past 10-15 years, emissions from transportation sources have increased in spite of steady improvements in pollutant releases from modern vehicles; this lack of overall improvement in mobile emissions is linked directly to the increased number of private vehicle trips and truck trips in our city and the surrounding area.

Clean Air Hamilton recognizes that a key component to reach our goals of improved air quality and mitigated climate change is the need to reduce vehicular emissions. One important way to achieve this goal is to provide Hamiltonians with access to efficient, low-polluting transportation alternatives.

Clean Air Hamilton supports the City in the principle of investigating options for rapid transit in Hamilton. A full city bus can remove up to 50 private vehicles from our roads and a full light rail transit up to 300 private vehicles. To increase ridership and reduce vehicle trips, the option of rapid transit must be affordable, convenient and attractive to the public.

Clean Air Hamilton sponsors the Upwind/Downwind Conference every other year. At more than one conference we have heard presentations on the environmental and economic spinoff benefits associated with LRT projects. These presentations cited the preference of many riders for an LRT system over a BRT system. Clean Air Hamilton recognizes the increased initial cost of an LRT system; we encourage you and your committee to examine not only ridership factors but also the economic impacts and benefits that LRT systems have brought to large urban centres, particularly where downtown redevelopment has been an issue.

Strong public transit systems are essential to improving air quality in our cities and will go a long way to reducing locally generated emissions which contribute to the premature deaths and hospitalizations associated with poor air quality in Hamilton.

Yours truly,

Dr. Brian McCurry, Chair  
Clean Air Hamilton

cc: Jillian Stephen, Manager – Capital Planning, Public Works
May 26, 2008

Mr. Mayor and Members of Council
City of Hamilton
77 James Street North
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 2K3

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of Council:

Re: GORE PARK PEDESTRIAN PLAZA AND RAPID TRANSIT PROPOSALS FOR HAMILTON

The City of Hamilton is currently reviewing its Downtown Transportation Master Plan. The conversion of parts of King Street to 2-way traffic from Wellington to Queen is being addressed for possible implementation. In conjunction with this a project to redevelop Gore Park area along King Street into a “PEDESTRIAN PLAZA” (an open-air, on-street shopping mall with space for outdoor patios and locale for special street events) has been added to this proposal with several options to extend the closed plaza concept to Wellington. Also further changes to King Street have been proposed as part of a BRT/LRT transit development.

These projects will have a profound impact on the downtown business community in general and upon certain BIA members in particular.

IMPACT OF PEDESTRIAN PLAZA or SHARED SPACE CONCEPT ON BIA MEMBERS LOCATED IN THE GORE PARK AREA:

- King Street closure in any of the recommended versions could provide opportunities to be used by those businesses facing Gore Park in conjunction with outdoor patio activities and more on-street displays however would have a very detrimental effect on business levels and access to businesses such as the former Connaught site and Crowne Plaza Hotel. It would also remove some on street parking spaces on King Street which is not supported by the merchants on King.
- Programming on the south leg of King Street could attract more people to the area on a regular basis
• Commercial vehicles servicing BIA members within the Gore Park Area and along King Street will be limited to a certain window of access which would have a detrimental effect on supply vehicle movements, banking services, restaurant delivery services
• A reconfiguration of Hughson Street North and South would be necessary to facilitate a street closure at King and would make access to this area very difficult
• Bus laybys around Gore Park will be relocated to either MacNab Street or Hunter Street locations however keeping bus stops on the north side
• Public vehicle restrictions in the impacted area will restrict access to those businesses inside the closed area
• Creation of a rapid transit route from the Waterfront to the Airport through downtown will bring more people to the core however there are concerns for the narrowness of James Street North to accommodate two way rapid transit
• Creation of a rapid transit route from Eastgate Mall to Dundas through downtown will facilitate more use of public transit than is currently experienced however members are concerned about the King Street location for a two way rapid transit corridor
• The type of technology (BRT or LRT) the city will support in the wake of a $300 million investment by the Province of Ontario will still not be enough to complete the proposed system and will have a significant impact on the tax levels in Downtown Hamilton that are currently still too high.

The Downtown Hamilton BIA surveyed it membership, and also held a special membership meeting to explain the issues and receive comments and concerns from BIA members.

Recommendations:

The Downtown Hamilton BIA offers the following comments regarding the proposed changes to the Downtown Transportation Master Plan:

1. That only the south leg of King Street be closed to traffic (with restricted access for service and supply vehicles). We do not agree with the complete closure of King Street on the north side.
2. That the 8 bus stops on the south leg of King be relocated to a seamless transit centre at MacNab Street
3. That Hughson Street remain open to northbound traffic
4. That King Street be converted to 2 way traffic
5. That Gore Park and the south leg of King be redeveloped with streetscape improvements and more landscape changes necessary to ensure the reforestation and replanting of the park for more pedestrian use
6. That the City of Hamilton support a complete conversion to a LRT (Streetcar) transit system similar to Portland
7. That the recommended LRT route (East/West) be Main Street not King Street
8. That the recommended LRT route (North/South) be James and John Streets

We thank the City of Hamilton for the opportunity to provide input to the overall Downtown Hamilton Transportation Master Plan and hope that we can continue to provide feedback and input into a master plan that will be a positive influence on the Downtown Hamilton business community.

Sincerely

Tim Bullock
Chairman

cc. N. D'Souza, Project Manager, Downtown Transportation Master Plan
Jill Stephen, Manager, Strategic Planning, Rapid Transit Feasibility Study
May 30th, 2008

Mayor Fred Eisenberger and Members of Council
City of Hamilton
77 James Street North
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 2K3

Dear Mayor Fred and Members of Council:

RE: Pedestrianization of Downtown Hamilton

Through the current review of the City of Hamilton’s Downtown Transportation Plan, the possible implementation of two-way traffic on parts of King Street East between Wellington and Queens streets is addressed.

Originally, the plan was to convert King Street from one-way to two-way with a single traffic lane in each direction, flanked by parallel parking where feasible.

Now, there are a wide range of potential scenarios for the ‘Pedestrianization’ of King Street East ...

Of the various scenarios ... the only one that International Village BIA approves of is ...

. That ONLY the south leg of King Street be closed to traffic (with restricted access for service and supply vehicles).

. We do NOT agree with the complete closure of King Street on the North Side.

. We do agree with the temporary closure of King Street on the North Side for times of public celebration and/or community events as agreed to by the City of Hamilton and the respective business organizations and/or communities that would be directly or indirectly affected.
That the 8 bus stops on the south leg of King be relocated to a seamless transit center on MacNab Street.

That Hughson Street remain open to northbound traffic.

We agree with the recommendations of Downtown Hamilton BIA, that Gore Park and the south leg of King Street be redeveloped with streetscape improvements and more landscape changes necessary to ensure the reforestation and replanting of the park for more pedestrian use.

With regards to the Rapid Transit Proposals for Hamilton, International Village BIA supports...

1. Complete Conversion to a LRT (Streetcar) transit system. We prefer the system used in Portland, Oregon.

2. The recommended LRT route, East/West, be Main Street NOT King Street

3. The recommended LRT route, North/South, be James and John Streets.

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to the various proposals being made in presentations to members of Council and the citizens of the City of Hamilton on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Quaglia
Past Chair, Board of Management

Cc: N. D'Souza, Project Manager, Downtown Transportation Master Plan;
    D. Hull, General Manager, HSR
    Jill Stephen, Manager, Strategic Planning, Rapid Transit Feasibility Study
June 2, 2008

Scott Stewart
General Manager, Public Works
City of Hamilton
Hamilton City Centre
77 James Street North
Hamilton, Ontario
L8R 2K3

Dear Mr. Stewart:

RE: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the Durand Neighbourhood Association with our support for the light-rail rapid transit system.

As you know, the Durand neighbourhood is the inner-city district bound by Main Street West, James Street South, the Escarpment and Queen Street South. The Durand Neighbourhood Association (“DNA”) was established in 1972 as a politically independent community organization and chartered as a not-for-profit provincial corporation. It is the DNA’s vision to be an active, resident-based voice that successfully addresses priority issues affecting the neighbourhood to nurture a vibrant downtown community.

Consistent with our vision and the objectives of the Transportation Master Plan, we believe that the light-rail system would better help Hamilton achieve the following goals:

♦ Reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles;
♦ Increase the use of public transit; and
♦ Create a catalyst to economic development and growth.
Light rail has a proven record of increasing ridership, averages more passengers per vehicle than a bus, is more handicapped accessible, and offers a quieter, smoother ride. Light-rail transit would benefit the Durand neighbourhood and Hamilton by replacing polluting, noisy buses that crowd our streets, help to concentrate economic development downtown, increase business assessments to help reduce the residential tax-burden, and speed up travel to downtown and other areas of the city.

Thank you for your diligence in this initiative. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have questions or concerns.

Yours very truly,

Sarah Matthews, President
Durand Neighbourhood Association

cc: Jill Stewart, Strategic Planning
Mayor Fred Eisenberger and Members of Council
July 18, 2008

His Worship Mayor Fred Eisenberger and Members of Council
Hamilton City Centre
77 James Street North, Suite 230
Hamilton, ON L8R 2K3
(Sent via e-mail)

Dear Mayor Eisenberger and Members of Council:

The Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association of Resident Homeowners Inc. wishes to express their support for light rail transit (LRT) as the preferred rapid transit choice for Hamilton.

The AWWCA supports LRT over bus rapid transit (BRT) because of its potential to:

- attract new economic development and increase the tax assessment base
- attract new riders to public transit, helping Hamilton to achieve its goal of doubling per capita transit use
- decrease pollution
- decrease congestion
- improve the image of Hamilton locally and internationally as a progressive, forward-thinking city

In particular, LRT would benefit Ainslie Wood and Westdale by connecting our neighbourhoods to the rest of the city (and the greater Toronto region via GO) in the most comfortable, fast, and efficient way possible.

Since McMaster University students will see a vastly improved level of service, they will have a wider choice of places to live within easy reach of the campus, which will relieve pressure for additional student housing in our neighbourhoods.

We urge the city to pursue LRT, so as to be able to take advantage of the provincial funding made available through MoveOntario2020 and Metrolinx this fall.

Yours sincerely,

John Wigle, President
Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association of Resident Homeowners Inc.

cc (via e-mail):
Scott Stewart, General Manager of Public Works, City of Hamilton
Jillian Stephen, Manager, Strategic Planning, Public Works Department, City of Hamilton
Nicholas Kevlahan, Hamilton Light Rail steering committee member
Kenneth Sherman, Hamilton Light Rail steering committee member
Carolyn Kinsley, Corresponding Secretary, AWWCA
The City of Hamilton's Transportation Master Plan calls for the development and implementation of 3 Rapid Transit Lines (E-W along the current "BLine" route; N-S from the Airport to the Waterfront; and, E-W along the Mountain - using the Linc or Mohawk Rd.) The Ontario Governments "Move Ontario" budget will bring in approximately $300 million will be given to Hamilton towards Capital expenditures in developing these Rapid Transit lines. Currently, the City is looking at both Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit (LRT) as the options to adopting proper Rapid Transit within Hamilton.

Background:

Rapid Transit is not new to Hamilton. Currently, we have a pseudo BLine bus rapid transit (BRT) route that operates from Eastgate Square to McMaster University. Hamilton's Transportation Master Plan identified the need for improved Rapid Transit lines. It was anticipated that the initial phase would see BRT implemented first, with the move to LRT as budgets allow. With the announcement of the Ontario Governments "Move Ontario" and the creation of Metrolinx, some $300 million will be channelled to Hamilton for Capital Costs to develop Rapid Transit Lines. It should be noted that only two of the Rapid Transit Lines were identified in the "Move Ontario" program. (The E-W Mountain Line was not included as identified in Hamilton's Transportation Master Plan.)

The City is currently reviewing the costing models of LRT versus BRT, and through the PICs, have noted that LRT carries significant advantages over BRT. LRTs expansion capabilities and economic spin-offs show greater advantage over BRT, and that operational costs are relatively fixed over the term of a LRT line.

While there is still more study work to be done, it has been demonstrated very clearly that LRT carries fixed operating budgets (i.e. - fuel), the potential for increased development along the lines, and lower operating costs as the train size can be increased with use without adding additional manpower. Understanding that funding is only coming for Capital expenditures, the City should look at the long-term operating costs as they effect the tax base.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce urges the City of Hamilton to:

1. Utilize LRT for Rapid Transit development, while reserving our opinion as to optimal proposed routes.

2. Include full integration of growth development, employment development and comprehensive goods movement studies in the proposal.
June 9, 2008

His Worship, Mayor Fred Eisenberger
and Members of Council
City of Hamilton
Hamilton City Centre
77 James Street North
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 2K3

Dear Mayor Eisenberger and Members of Council,

I thought I would write to you about McMaster’s views regarding transit choices that are now being considered by the City of Hamilton. I wish to express my support for exploring light rail transit (LRT) along with other rapid transit alternatives, and trust that Hamilton’s preferred rapid transit choice will be based on full analysis of the relative strengths and weaknesses of these options.

The University is aware of both the ongoing discussions and the various draft plans that are being considered. At this stage of the project, McMaster is taking steps to ensure it is informed on this issue.

This process involves hearing from various individuals and groups through a variety of forums. I am pleased to learn that my colleague, Dr. Nicholas Kevlahan, is making a presentation to the President’s Advisory Committee on Community Relations (PACCR) at its meeting June 19, which will facilitate an exchange of views on this important issue with representatives of our immediate neighbourhood.

The University has also engaged with other stakeholders interested in these issues, including the Hamilton Street Railway, city staff and members of Council. We look forward to receiving ongoing information updates and encourage consistent dialogue as this initiative progresses.

The University is deeply interested in the outcome. Members of our University community will benefit from a rapid transit connection between the Central Campus, the McMaster Innovation Park, the McMaster Downtown Centre, and the proposed Downtown Family Health Centre that provides comfortable, fast and efficient service. Our students, staff and faculty will certainly benefit from an improved level of service which will effectively expand the range of choices of places to live within easy reach of campus, and hopefully lessen some of the pressure of high-density student housing on our neighbourhood.
We would be happy to nominate a member of the University faculty or staff to work with the City on the planning and development of the route(s) and stations serving McMaster.

Yours sincerely,

Peter George

cc: Scott Stewart, General Manager of Public Works
    Jillian Stephen, Manager, Strategic Planning
    Nicholas Kevlahan, McMaster University
His Worship Mayor Fred Eisenberger & Members of Council
Hamilton City Centre
77 James Street North, Suite 230
Hamilton, ON L8R 2K3

June 17, 2008

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

On behalf of the McMaster Students Union (MSU), we are writing to express our full support for the development of a light rail transit system (LRT) in Hamilton. We understand that some in our community have voiced concern about the light rail transit option, however, we know that an LRT system would be beneficial to the students of our university, the McMaster community, and more generally, the city of Hamilton as a whole.

This goal of bringing an LRT system to Hamilton will work to facilitate the growth of our city. It will allow students easier accessibility of the downtown core, as well as help rejuvenate this area with more business and life. It will also help students who live off campus. An efficient LRT design will create an environment wherein McMaster students will choose to live, rent and buy property in more diverse areas of the city. In turn, the diversification of student living areas will help alleviate the some of the town and gown issues currently facing the high-density student housing surrounding the McMaster campus. As a result, Hamilton will experience an increase in property values in the Westdale area, as well as throughout the city and downtown core.

We hope that to begin this project, one of the main goals will be to construct the McMaster University to Gore Park stretch of the LRT track as quickly as possible. This will help with some of the current transit issues on this stretch, and it will serve as a good example to demonstrate the benefits of the LRT to the Hamilton community.

We urge you to move forward with the decision to develop light rail transit in Hamilton as the best option for students, and the future of this city. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

McMaster Students Union

Azim Kasmani
President

Michael Pett
House Leader
Jillian Stephen
Manager, Strategic Planning
Capital Planning and Implementation
Public Works Department
Tel: 905-546-2424 x. 6392
eplanning@hamilton.ca

Re: public consultation process for the development of rapid transit in Hamilton.

Hello Jillian,

The Hamilton Partners for Healthy Weights discussed the City’s plans for rapid transit at our recent steering committee meeting. At that meeting we identified six items for consideration as the City considers transit alternatives.

1) We suggest the City pursue the option of an LRT network. This will foster an intensified built environment more effectively than BRT. An LRT network establishes permanent routes that provide developers information regarding the location of potential high-density development. Higher density development in the proximity of transit stations has the potential to encourage more active transport to the stations (walking and cycling). This could enhance the physical activity within the population.

2) We support the LRT network to encourage a larger proportion of the population to use transit rather than autos. If the LRT is more appealing, than BRT, to the public it could lead to more walking and cycling.

3) We suggest the LRT network be extended in the west, past University Plaza to downtown Dundas. Downtown Dundas offers housing and commercial activity within a convenient walk or cycle from an LRT station. The LRT will foster a more active population in Dundas and have a positive impact on the local economy.

4) We suggest the LRT network be extended in the east, past Eastgate Square, closer to the residential, commercial, and employment activity in Stoney Creek. The LRT will foster a more active population in Stoney Creek and have a positive impact of connecting this community to the rest of Hamilton.
5) We suggest the LRT network is designed with the capacity to accommodate commuters with bicycles. Many commuters could use their bicycle as a part of their daily commute. For example, commuters will cycle from home to the LRT station and then from their terminal LRT station to work or recreation areas.

6) We support that all LRT stations be equipped with secure/monitored bicycle storage.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the planning of Hamilton's future transit network.

On behalf of the Hamilton Partners for Health Weights Steering Committee,

Randy

Chair, Hamilton Partners for Healthy Weights
Program Manager
Metabolism, Exercise and Nutrition Portfolio
McMaster Children's Hospital
Phone (905) 521-2100 ext. 74183