



INFORMATION REPORT

TO: Chair and Members Public Works Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: April 4, 2011	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Rapid Transit Update - B-Line Planning, Design and Engineering, A-Line Feasibility and B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Study (PW11020/PED11068) - (City Wide)	
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SIGNATURE: 	

Council Direction:

As part of the City's Rapid Transit initiative and Nodes and Corridors Planning; the Rapid Transit and Nodes and Corridors Planning teams have brought forward a number of reports for Council's consideration, endorsement and information; as staff work towards securing provincial funding for rapid transit in Hamilton. This Information Report provides an update on the work that has been undertaken to date, through the \$3M received from the Province of Ontario for Planning, Design and Engineering on the B-Line and Feasibility Study for the A-Line. It also provides an update on the B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Study.

Information:

Background

On April 1, 2009, the City of Hamilton received \$3M from the Province of Ontario (administered by Metrolinx) for the Planning, Design and Engineering (PDE) of the B-Line and Feasibility Study for the A-Line. The B- and A- Lines, together with the rest of the proposed BLAST rapid transit network are shown in Appendix "A". Report PW09088 - Contribution Agreement between Metrolinx and the City of Hamilton for

Rapid Transit Studies, gave staff the authorization to enter into a Contribution Agreement that set out how the \$3M would be spent.

Through a competitive bid process, Steer Davies Gleave was retained by the City of Hamilton to undertake the PDE and feasibility work. This work will be complete in summer 2011. The next steps following the PDE work are the Environmental Assessment for the B-Line (included in the \$3M) and then a higher level of detailed design (not funded through the \$3M). For the A-Line, the next steps would be a Benefits Case Analysis (typically completed by Metrolinx), and PDE analysis.

In February 2010, Metrolinx released their Benefits Case Analysis (BCA) for the B-Line. This report examined full LRT (light rail transit), full BRT (bus rapid transit) and phased LRT for the B-Line. Full BRT was found to have the lowest cost and lowest benefits, while LRT was found to have the highest benefits and highest cost. The Metrolinx Board received the report but did not endorse one mode over another. However, the Contribution Agreement states that the B-Line work will be focused on LRT.

Concurrent with the start of the PDE study and feasibility work by Steer Davies Gleave, the Planning and Economic Development Department began work on a Secondary Plan level plan for the B-Line corridor. This work builds on the Nodes and Corridors identified in the Urban Official Plan, a number of Secondary Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, and the Transit Oriented Design Guidelines. This work also draws on provincial policy as outlined in the Provincial Policy Statement, Places to Grow, the Greenbelt Plan and The Big Move (Regional Transportation Plan). Public consultation on the land use study began last September at a Public Information Centre held in conjunction with the Rapid Transit initiative. Consultation has continued into 2011 as outlined below.

The A-Line feasibility work, which is underway, looks at both BRT and LRT, the preferred route (including escarpment crossing), as well as the land use component. This study will determine the preferred route, mode and will provide guidance on appropriate land uses along the corridor. An introductory Public Information Centre (PIC) was held on December 9, 2010, and valuable feedback was received through written comment submissions.

In January 2011, the draft preferred design of the B-Line LRT was taken to the public for their review and comment. Details of this consultation and of the feedback received are included in the Consultation Update section of this report.

Consultation Update

The Rapid Transit Team has been consulting with stakeholders, which includes: residents, business owners, institutions, schools, property owners, agencies, utilities and others since the first phase of the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study was initiated in November 2007. Throughout the autumn of 2010, the team held focus group meetings with small groups of residents and business owners from along the corridor to assist with visioning for the land use study components. This was followed by a City wide land use visioning workshop for the B-Line on January 11, 2011. This recent round of consultation and outreach continued into January 2011, when the Rapid Transit Team

hosted or participated in six Public Information Centres, conducted corridor walks and visits to businesses, met with key stakeholders, and Provincial officials. A seventh public information centre was postponed to March 3rd due to inclement weather on the originally planned date. Other forms of outreach and consultation activities include the Rapid Transit Newsletter and website, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and advertising and handouts on HSR buses. Staff also continue to follow blogs and comments on websites to determine public reaction to LRT. A land use workshop tailored to developers is being planned for March, 2011. A verbal update on this matter was provided to Public Works Committee on February 7, 2011.

Approximately 600 people attended the Public Information Centres and approximately 150 attended the land use visioning events. The majority of the comments received to date have been in support of LRT and come from perspectives of increased connectivity, increased travel options and city building/downtown rejuvenation. Concerns heard during the consultation included cost, traffic, access and parking impacts, the absence of two-way conversions of Main Street and Cannon Street and the feeling that the A-Line should proceed first. In addition, valuable input has been received from the land use visioning exercises in terms of stakeholders' vision for the future character and revitalization of the B-Line corridor. Through the visioning exercises, several issues/themes for the corridor were identified such as; diversity, quality aesthetics and urban design, vibrant gathering places, focal points and destinations, pride and sense of place, connectivity, vitality, pedestrian friendly and sustainability.

The Rapid Transit Citizen Advisory Committee (RTCAC) was formed in September 2010 and has been an important part of the consultation and outreach process. The RTCAC meets monthly and provides the Rapid Transit Team with advice, comments and a sounding board before information is taken to the broader public.

Further public consultation such as RTCAC meetings, workshops and charrettes, public information centres and newsletters will be a key component of the ongoing process. The B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Planning Study will continue to be coordinated with the Rapid Transit Initiative.

Status of Technical Studies

The B-Line PDE work is more than 50% complete. The preferred draft design has been vetted through staff, was presented to members of Council at the Council workshop on January 7, 2011 and at the preview of the PIC material on January 17, 2011, and was presented to the public and stakeholders throughout January and February. Once changes resulting from public, agency or staff feedback; from transit or traffic modelling; or as a result of the land use study are incorporated, the drawings will be taken to a 30% design level. This will then be used to update operational and financial considerations. The PDE work is expected to be complete at the end of the second quarter of 2011.

The A-Line Feasibility Study will be complete by the end of 2011.

Status of Land Use Study

The B-Line land use study examines the area between 500m and 800m on either side of the B-Line corridor, including lands on the corridor itself and the neighbourhood fabric behind. This work will be at a Secondary Plan level of detail. The Nodes and Corridors team has identified corridor vision, goals, and development principles. The B-Line Corridor Draft Vision Statement developed through extensive stakeholder input as noted above, is attached as Appendix B. The team is currently working on land use strategies and options, plans for transit station areas and urban design principles. This work, along with an implementation strategy, is expected to be complete in Fall 2011.

Contribution Agreement Update

The Contribution Agreement between the City and Metrolinx for the \$3M that is funding the PDE and Feasibility work, sets the program to be followed so that the project is brought to “a maximum state of implementation readiness”. The staff team believes that being at “a maximum state of implementation readiness” includes technical components, but also includes knowing and understanding the answers to the following questions:

- What will LRT cost on the B-Line?
- How will LRT on the B-Line be paid for?
- What benefits will Hamilton see as a result of implementing LRT on the B-Line?
- What is our level of certainty of achieving these benefits?
- Are the benefits and costs different for BRT? If so, what are the differences?

Financial Update

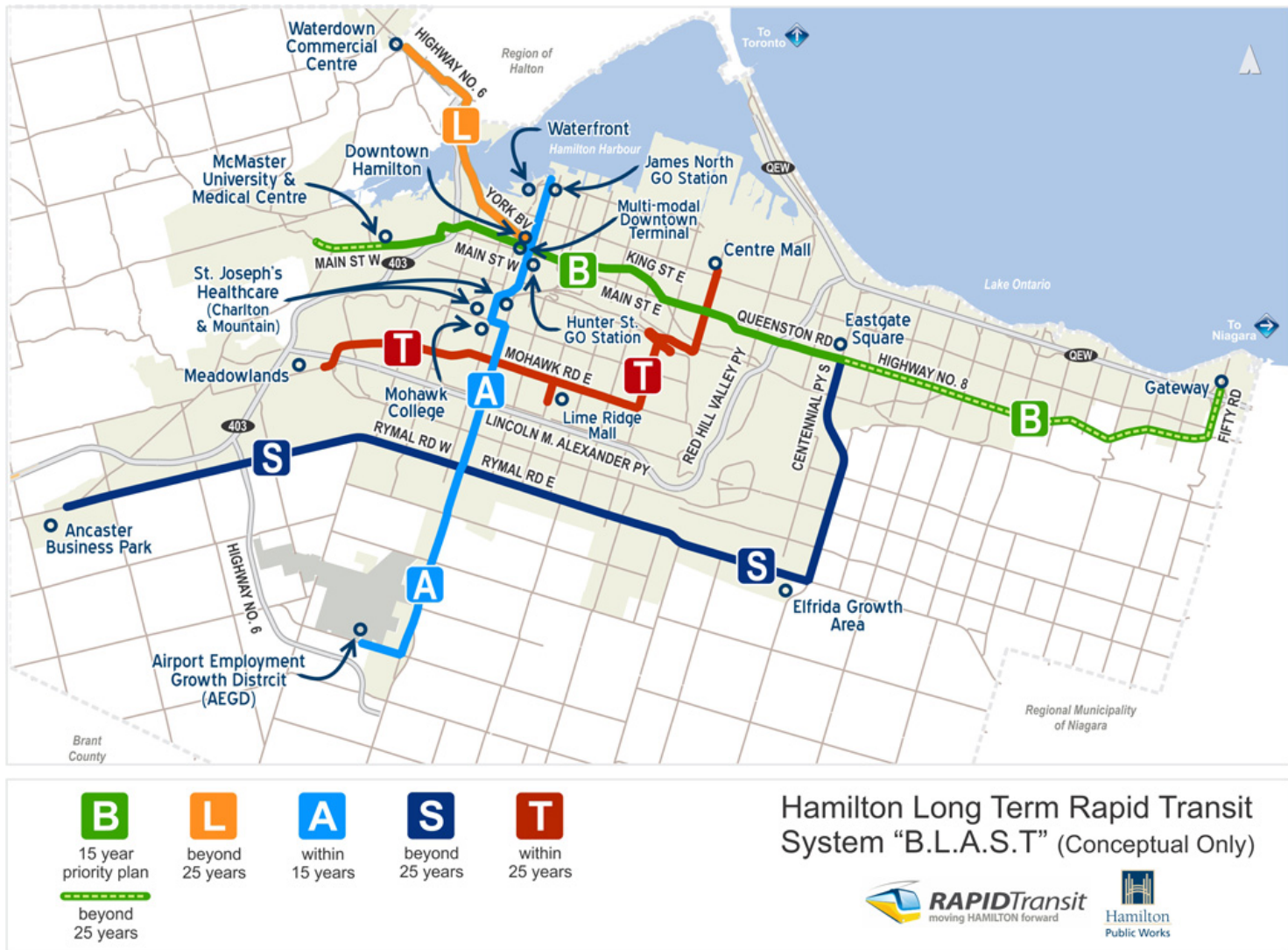
As noted above, the staff team is working to understand the full costs and benefits of LRT, including who will pay for the system and its operation. Construction and operating costs of LRT, uplift, and changes to capital and operating costs for regular municipal activities (snow clearing, street trees, street sweeping, etc.) will be included in the cost and benefit analysis.

The Benefits Case Analysis completed for the B-Line in February 2010 included a cost estimate of \$830M (in 2008 dollars) for full LRT on the B-Line.

Next Steps

The Rapid Transit Team will complete the PDE work for the B-Line, then report back to Committee with the results, prior to commencing the Environmental Assessment. The report to Committee will include technical, financial, land use updates and consultation information, including risks and benefits. With respect to the B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Planning Study, the study will continue into 2011 and will involve the development of area plans for stations and nodes, urban design guidelines and an implementation strategy. Upon completion of the planning process a statutory public meeting will be required.

APPENDIX "A" - BLAST Map



APPENDIX “B” - B-Line Corridor Draft Vision Statement

The B-Line Corridor is...

DIVERSE

The corridor comprises vibrant and diverse neighbourhoods, made up of a mix of housing, services and amenities for all ages, incomes, household types, cultures and abilities. The diverse character of the unique neighbourhoods, places, buildings and streetscapes along the corridor, are recognized and celebrated.

BEAUTIFUL

The corridor is an attractive high quality environment. Beautiful buildings, public spaces, landscapes and streetscapes work together in creating places where people want to live, work, play and visit. Streetscapes are human scale, animated, comfortable, accessible and safe. Walking and gathering are promoted.

CONNECTED

The corridor connects people and their neighbourhoods to each other and important places in the City and beyond. The corridor promotes multiple ways for everyone to move around seamlessly, safely, and comfortably, by foot, bike, transit and car.

SUSTAINABLE

The corridor contributes to a sustainable future for the whole city. Innovative transportation options, efficient use of land, energy and resources, and an innovative sustainable built environment promotes healthy lifestyles and high quality of life for present and future generations.

REVITALIZED

The corridor is a destination for new investment and employment opportunities. The character of existing neighbourhoods is enhanced through renewal of buildings and businesses. A growing population supports new development, services and amenities.