



Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO: Chair and Members Planning Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: July 5, 2011	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Planning Study and Mid-Rise Development (PED11125) (City Wide)	
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SIGNATURE: 	

Council Direction:

As part of the City's Nodes and Corridors Planning and Rapid Transit initiative, a number of reports for Council's consideration have been brought forward for endorsement and information. This Information Report and accompanying presentation provide an update on the planning work underway for the B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Planning Study (see study area, attached as Appendix "A"), specifically as it relates to proposed mid-rise development along the corridor.

Information:

Corridors and Residential Intensification in the Urban Official Plan

To implement the Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (2006), the Urban Official Plan (OP) was adopted in 2009 (currently under appeal). Residential intensification is a key component of Hamilton's growth strategy and is essential to meet growth and employment targets. By 2015, Hamilton must achieve at least 40% of all residential development within its built up area. Intensification ensures land and infrastructure are used more efficiently. It also ensures sufficient population is maintained to support community facilities and amenities, such as health care, schools, recreational services, grocery stores, etc. This is particularly important with respect to the neighbourhoods along the B-Line corridor. Although population City-wide has been

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Based on the OP, intensification and reurbanization activities will be focused along corridors such as the B-Line (Main-King-Main-Queenston, see "Appendix A") and within nodes, such as Downtown and Eastgate. These areas are intended to evolve with higher mixed use densities and will provide a significant opportunity for creating vibrant pedestrian and transit oriented places through investment in infrastructure, residential intensification, infill and redevelopment and careful attention to urban design. Secondary Plans are intended to be prepared for nodes and corridors in order to provide more detailed and community specific guidance for growth and change.

B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Planning Study

In order to benefit from an integrated approach, the B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Planning Study was initiated and is being coordinated with the Rapid Transit Initiative, but is required to be undertaken in implementation of the new urban Official Plan. It is a Secondary Plan level of study that will establish a high level vision for the corridor including a set of development principles through the engagement of corridor stakeholders. The vision and principles will guide future change and development in the corridor. The study will also result in more detailed plans for station areas and nodes including urban design guidelines. The study area will generally include lands along the B-Line and extends approximately 14 km from Eastgate Square/Centennial Parkway in the East to McMaster University in the west (see "Appendix A"). Previous Information Updates (July 6, 2010, December 13, 2010 and May 11, 2011) and Information Reports (April 4, 2011, PW11020/PED11068) provided general updates to Council with respect to land use planning studies for the B-line.

Throughout the autumn of 2010, focus group meetings were held 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. A further focus group session was held on March 25, 2011 to reach out to those in the development industry with interest or experience in developing intensification projects. The project team heard through the land use visioning exercises that revitalization through new investment and employment opportunities and a growing population along the corridor is important to citizens. The Nodes and Corridors team is currently working on land use strategies and options, plans for transit station areas and urban design principles. A parking and loading strategy is also underway and will be incorporated into the overall study. An initial analysis of development potential along the B-Line Corridor suggests that there are opportunities along the corridor for multi-storey development (e.g. tall and mid-rise buildings), small scale redevelopment, adaptive reuse and infill. Based on the available lot sizes and fabric, the greatest potential for reurbanization is through mid-rise development form.

Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study, City of Toronto (May 2010)

Many municipalities have been exploring the mid-rise development form to achieve intensification, while integrating into an established urban fabric. Similar to Hamilton, the

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City of Toronto's Official Plan encourages a significant portion of its growth to be directed towards intensification areas, some of which are the "Avenues". The City of Toronto has undertaken a recent study investigating the role of mid-rise development in meeting its intensification targets. Estimates suggest that, in Toronto, mid-rise redevelopment could address a significant portion of the City's anticipated growth needs over the next twenty years. Also similar to Hamilton OP policy, the mid-rise built form is intended to recognize the unique connection to the surrounding neighbourhoods through a development form that is moderate in scale with high quality design and materials. In the Toronto context, the height of mid-rise buildings is tied to the width of the street, so that generally, buildings are limited to between 5 and 11 storeys. In order to provide for a built form that further reduces shading and privacy impacts, the ability to build to the maximum height is also subject to angular planes applied to the front and rear of the site. This concept is shown by the illustration attached as "Appendix B".

The Toronto Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study is an excellent model of how to use the mid-rise development form to achieve intensification, while integrating into an established urban fabric.

Mid-Rise Development in the Hamilton Reurbanization Context

Planning and Economic Development staff are looking to adapt an approach similar to that within the Toronto Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study to the B-Line Corridor Plan. However, in adapting these principles, it is important that a made in Hamilton approach be formulated.

In consultation with citizens on the B-Line Nodes and Corridors Land Use Planning Study, staff has heard that they want a reurbanized corridor through an increasing population, improved image, better public spaces and sustainable public services. At the same time, many have voiced concerns about the impacts of new development and intensification necessary to accomplish reurbanization. These concerns are not unique to the Hamilton community. The Midrise Symposium Discussion Paper (2009) by the Canadian Urban Institute stresses the importance of public education to build confidence in the mid-rise building form, and alleviate fears. The following are some of the concerns related to intensification expressed by stakeholders:

- Low quality or no development may occur.
- Scale of intensification internal to neighbourhoods.
- More traffic congestion.
- Building heights may be too tall.
- Traffic/parking impacts on neighbourhoods.
- Maintaining housing affordability.
- Lack of safe high quality pedestrian environment.

Recognizing that there has been very little new development along the corridor for many years, further public consultation is being planned that would educate the public about intensification, learn more about their concerns and illustrate how to design new

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development to address concerns. The following are the goals for this public consultation process:

- To share staff analysis of the corridor with citizens, discuss the need for increased population and new investment along the corridor and the possible locations and types of development that may occur.
- To determine what citizens think will be the positive and negative affects of new development on their neighbourhoods, assuming that larger buildings will be part of new corridor investment.
- To determine the unique characteristics of each section of corridor (as shown on "Appendix A").
- To develop, working with citizens, conceptual designs for specific station areas along the corridor that illustrate options for how new development may be accommodated, while enhancing the unique character of each distinct area, and minimizing potential negative effects on the neighbourhoods.

A series of two-part events involving a small design charrette followed by a public meeting are to be held in late June to early July this year. The first part of each event will involve a group of invited local stakeholders and citizens working with city staff and a local architect to develop a series of design criteria and conceptual design(s) for the specific station area. The second stage will be an open public meeting where the conceptual design(s) will be presented for discussion and comment. These events will focus on proposed LRT stops and surrounding station areas where there is potential for redevelopment. The results of these events will be used to evaluate intensification strategies and to inform new planning policies, urban design and zoning for the corridor.

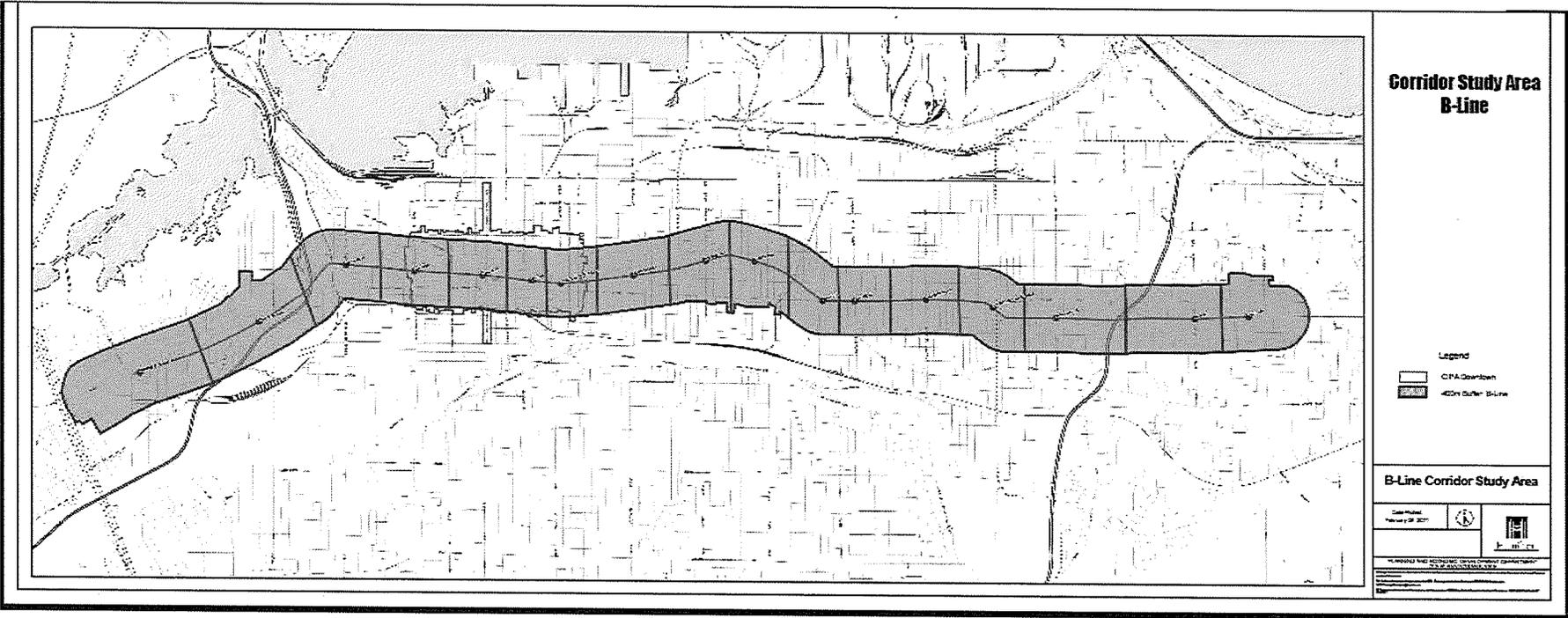
Conclusion:

Based on the above, mid-rise development is expected to be a significant component of the B-Line Corridor Plan. Furthermore, as the City continues to implement the Urban Official Plan, this type of development is also expected to play an important role in meeting intensification targets in other areas of the City. The final B-Line Corridor Plan is expected to be brought to the Planning and Development Committee this autumn for endorsement. It should also be noted that, although the B-Line Corridor land use planning study is being coordinated with the rapid transit initiative, the planning study is an important implementation measure of the new Official Plan and is relevant regardless of LRT. Ongoing updates, meetings and Information Reports will be used to inform Council leading up to the introduction of the B-Line Corridor Plan this Fall.

Appendix "A" to Report PED11125 - Study Area

Appendix "B" to Report PED11125 - Mid Rise Building Concept from: Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study, City of Toronto (May 2010)

Study Area



Mid-Rise Building Concept from : Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study, City of Toronto (May 2010)

