

CITY OF HAMILTON

***PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Capital Planning & Implementation Division***

Report to: Chair and Members Public Works Committee	Submitted by: Scott Stewart, C.E.T. General Manager Public Works Department
Date: May 28, 2008	Prepared by: Lisa Zinkewich Extension 1473 Jillian Stephen Extension 6392

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study - Public Consultation Update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide)**

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) That staff be directed to continue the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study (Phase 2) with a focus on Light Rail Transit;
- (b) That staff be directed to report back to Public Works Committee in September 2008 with a proposed workplan for future studies, public consultation, design and construction;
- (c) That staff continue discussions with Metrolinx to ensure a Hamilton Rapid Transit project is identified in their 2009 - 2013 rolling five year capital plan.

Scott Stewart, C.E.T.
General Manager
Public Works

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Rapid Transit Feasibility Study was initiated in November 2007 in response to the Province's MoveOntario 2020 vision for rapid transit in Ontario and the allocation of \$17.5 billion for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). Prior to this funding commitment from the Province, City Council had endorsed the Hamilton Transportation Master Plan (February 2007) which identified Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors, with the potential for Light Rail Transit (LRT) in the long term. The MoveOntario 2020 announcement has allowed Hamilton to accelerate rapid transit planning beyond what

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 2 of 20**

was considered in the HTMP because, at the time that the HTMP was completed, Provincial and Federal funding at the levels indicated in MoveOntario 2020 was not anticipated.

The Rapid Transit Feasibility Study was presented to Public Works Committee on April 14, 2008. Following its approval at Council April 23, 2008 staff initiated the Public Consultation component. Over the past two months, staff have presented and discussed with the public both overall observations about the opportunities and constraints of providing rapid transit, as well as a section-by-section breakdown of what each corridor would look like if rapid transit is provided. For the RTFS, it was assumed that the existing right-of-way widths would not be significantly changed, and that the same corridor design would be used for either BRT or LRT. This study was meant to be a starting point in the discussions about the type of rapid transit to pursue for Hamilton, and not a detailed analysis of alternative routes or exact design details.

City staff held two Public Information Centres on May 6, 2008 and May 8, 2008, set up a project website www.hamilton.ca/rapid-transit and a direct project e-mail rapidtransit@hamilton.ca. Public comments have been submitted through these outlets and more than 150 interested public attended the two PIC's. Staff have also been following the discussion on rapid transit that has been taking place through various media outlets, both prior to and following the Public Works Committee meeting on April 14, 2008. The Hamilton Light Rail grassroots interest group hosted a presentation and panel discussion, on May 1, 2008, which was attended by more than 120 residents, and also included a presentation by City staff. At all of the public sessions and through the media blogs the overall public opinion of those responding to the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study is that there is support for the implementation of a rapid transit system, particularly for an LRT system. The following provides a summary of the responses provided to a questionnaire put forth to the public by the City.

There is overwhelming support for Light Rail Transit (71%) over Bus Rapid Transit (4%). Of those that commented (116 residents), 16% believed that either mode would be acceptable. Overall 91% of respondents believe that a rapid transit system, either LRT or BRT is required in Hamilton. The additional 9% of respondents that do not support either LRT or BRT is split between supporting another technology i.e. monorail or no system at all.

Further revealing support for LRT, 90% of those that commented noted that they would not use a Bus Rapid Transit System, but would however utilize an LRT system.

Only 17% of respondents believe that the capital cost of the system is an important criterion when determining the mode that a rapid transit system should utilize. In determining what the most important criteria should be in determining if the system should be LRT or BRT, potential economic benefit (70%) and potential to attract new ridership (70%) were weighted the highest, followed by environmental impact (65%). It is important to also note that the respondents believe that the City shouldn't be responsible for much more than 50% of the capital costs of the system and that it should be shared between all three levels of government. The proposed corridors were supported by 86% of respondents and 96% would support additional routes or extensions to the corridors as proposed.

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 3 of 20**

Overall, there was an immediate public interest in the idea of rapid transit and what the development of a rapid transit system in Hamilton could mean for the City as a whole. The belief of the public responding to on-line polls, web blogs and the City's comment sheet was that a rapid transit system, particularly a LRT system would have positive implications in terms of economics (attracting new businesses and an increase in City revenue), the environment (less congestion and pollution), and the ability to provide the City with a better image (keeping up with other cities, clean, modern, hip and quiet).

Staff consistently heard that the time is now for LRT and that the City must seize the opportunity to move forward and to not miss out on the opportunity at hand to construct a rapid transit system that would compete with other world class cities, all of which have some sort of rail oriented transportation system, particularly with the Province supporting this initiative and proposing funds towards its capital costs. Those in support of an LRT system believe that by pursuing this option, Hamilton would be considered a leader through the development of an innovative system, particularly through bridging the gap between the distinct areas of the City, particularly lower Hamilton with the Mountain. Although some public see the escarpment as an obstacle, many believe it to be an opportunity to create a true cosmopolitan city, if planned and designed appropriately. Staff agree that there is opportunity for a made in Hamilton solution to address the constraints identified in the Feasibility Study. Based on the feedback to date, the general public's belief was that a Light Rail Transit system could potentially breathe life into the economy of the City of Hamilton and that the issue of providing a rapid transit system in Hamilton was not a transit issue, but rather an issue of economic importance, revitalization and image changing.

Where there is not support for a Rapid Transit System, it tends to be related to concern over the cost of the system and/or a sense that the system itself is not needed, that the transportation system should remain status quo. The idea of status quo however is in contravention of the City's Transportation Master Plan and Metrolinx's draft Regional Transportation Plan Green Papers and White Papers. Particularly, in regards to the continuing issues related to peak oil prices and the demand for environmentally sustainable transportation options, the general sense from the public is that the time is now for Hamilton to do something bold and innovative.

It is not believed that a bus rapid transit system would have the same potential for economic prosperity of that of a light rail system and that a bus rapid system would not move the city forward in terms of meeting the goals and objectives of the policies that are included in GRIDS and the HTMP, as well as overall City visions i.e. the best place to raise a child.

On-going discussions with Metrolinx have also been taking place in regards to both the Regional Transportation Master Plan that the Province is developing in support of the MoveOntario 2020 vision, as well capital funding requirements, funding timing and operating cost discussions. Most recently, Metrolinx has advised that their first five (5) year rolling Capital Plan is expected to be released in November 2008. It is important that Hamilton be included in the first cut of this Plan. As a result of the importance in providing Metrolinx the information they require for the development of their five year capital plan, direction from Public Works Committee and Council on the type of Rapid Transit to pursue is key prior to the fall. The City needs to provide Metrolinx with a commitment towards moving forward with the implementation of a rapid transit system

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 4 of 20**

for Hamilton prior to the development of the provincial funding plan for 2009 – 2013. To meet this deadline, staff will report back to Public Works Committee no later than September 2008 with a proposed workplan for future studies, design and construction for Public Works Committee's consideration and endorsement.

Although the proposed A-Line and B-Line routes do not run through Wards 6, 10, 12, 14 or 15, this report has City-wide implications because of the magnitude of the decision regarding the provision of rapid transit in Hamilton, and because of future opportunities to provide other rapid transit routes in the longer term.

In regards to meeting these timelines, staff have developed a comprehensive communications plan to maintain the excitement that has been generated and keep rapid transit at the forefront of discussions over the next couple of months. Meetings between staff and stakeholder groups will continue over the summer months and a work plan will be developed that can be presented to Metrolinx in the fall, subject to Council approval, for inclusion in their five year rolling capital plan.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2007, Public Works staff initiated a Rapid Transit Feasibility Study (RTFS). This study was to review the constraints and opportunities for the development of a higher order transit system in the City of Hamilton. The study focused strictly on two corridors that were recommended in the City's Transportation Master Plan (HTMP - 2007) and that were also identified as part of the Provincial Vision for transit in MoveOntario 2020.

At the time that the HTMP was completed (February 2007), it was envisioned that Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines would be used in Hamilton. The BRT lines were to be phased such that the network started with a "BRT-lite" version (similar to the existing B-Line), and then expanded to full BRT, with the potential to move to Light Rail Transit (LRT) in the long term.

In June 2007, the Province of Ontario released their MoveOntario 2020 plan. MoveOntario 2020 is a \$17.5 billion plan for rapid transit in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), an area that stretches from Hamilton to Durham Region. Fifty-two projects were identified, including 2 that impact Hamilton directly:

- Rapid transit along the King/Main Corridor, between Eastgate Square and MacMaster University; and
- Rapid transit along the James/Upper James Corridor between King Street and Rymal Road.

Of the \$17.5 billion, approximately two-thirds of the funding will come from the Province, and the remaining one-third is to come from the Federal Government.

The MoveOntario 2020 announcement allowed Hamilton to accelerate rapid transit planning beyond what was considered in the HTMP, hence the initiation of the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study, and to consider the use of LRT in the short term, instead of starting with BRT and moving to LRT in the longer term. At the time that the HTMP was completed, Provincial and Federal funding at the levels indicated in MoveOntario 2020 was not anticipated.

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 5 of 20**

The Rapid Transit Feasibility Study (initiated November 2007) investigated the major considerations in route selection including such things as land use, existing transit service, rights of way (widths, users, infrastructure [surface and subsurface], construction impacts), timing, signal priority, dedicated lanes, as well as an analysis of the feasibility and requirements for implementation of rapid transit system to assist in the determination of the type of technology, Light Rail Transit or Bus Rapid Transit that should ultimately be implemented. The RTFS also included additional key nodes along the identified routes, including University Plaza (east-west route), the waterfront and the Airport (north-south route) that were not originally identified in the HTMP.

The RTFS contains both overall observations about the opportunities and constraints of providing rapid transit, and a section-by-section breakdown of what each corridor would look like if rapid transit is provided. For the RTFS, it was assumed that the existing right-of-way widths would not be significantly changed, and that the same corridor design would be used for either BRT or LRT. This study was meant to be a starting point in the discussions about the type of rapid transit to pursue for Hamilton, and not a detailed analysis of alternative routes or exact design details. Class Environmental Assessments will still need to be completed, once the decision of whether to use LRT, BRT, or a combination of both, is made, and alternatives for design and routing will be examined at that stage.

An important aspect of the RTFS is that it provides an overview of the general opportunities and constraints with respect to providing rapid transit in Hamilton. It does not provide a detailed review of each and every alternative corridor, nor does it make a recommendation of which type of vehicles (LRT or BRT) should be used in Hamilton. What the RTFS does do, is to indicate the opportunities, cost estimates and operating requirements that have generated a significant amount of discussion in the community at large.

The RTFS work was undertaken by McCormick Rankin Corporation (MRC), and project managed by Public Works staff. A staff technical advisory team with representation from Planning and Economic Development and Public Works was assembled to provide information and guidance to MRC throughout the course of the study. Finance has provided a key link to Metrolinx (and therefore the MoveOntario 2020 projects) prior to, and throughout, this process.

Although the proposed A-Line and B-Line routes do not run through Wards 6, 10, 12, 14 or 15, this report has City-wide implications because of the magnitude of the decision regarding the provision of rapid transit in Hamilton, and because of future opportunities to provide other rapid transit routes in the longer term.

The above was all presented in Staff Report PW08043, which was presented to Public Work Committee on April 14, 2008 and was approved at Council on April 23, 2008. In addition to recommending that staff be authorized and directed to release the findings of the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study for public consultation, it provides additional background on the Transportation Master Plan, MoveOntario 2020 and the findings of the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study.

ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

There was an immediate public interest in rapid transit and what the development of a rapid transit system in Hamilton could mean for the City as a whole, following the release of the Public Works Committee agenda for the April 14, 2008 meeting. Various media outlets covered the issue prior to report PW08043 being presented to Public Work Committee, including the Hamilton Spectator, the Brabant Newspapers, Raise the Hammer, CATCH, Cable 14 and various radio media outlets. As such, staff began monitoring the numerous media outlets web pages, blogs and other coverage to gauge overall opinions on both the idea of implementing a rapid transit system in Hamilton as well as to gather data on the preference in regards to what type of technology should be implemented. Before even presenting to Public Works Committee, staff understood the interest and excitement that this project would generate in the community.

With the release of the Public Works agenda the initial focus of the discussion in the media was on whether or not rapid transit should be implemented and which option, BRT or LRT, was preferred. In line with the purpose of the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study, the initial discussions brought the public forward to debate the pros and cons of both Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit, with many sharing their experiences of LRT systems throughout Europe and North American Cities. The belief of the public responding to on-line polls and web blogs was that a rapid transit system, particularly a LRT system would have positive implications in terms of economics (attracting new businesses and an increase in City revenue), the environment (less congestion and pollution), and the ability to provide the City with a better image (keeping up with other cities, clean, modern, hip and quiet).

Following Public Works Committee on April 14, 2008, the media focused their articles on the technical aspects, such as potential lane reductions within the corridors and the actual feasibility of implementing a rapid transit system. It was noted that critical decisions would need to be made that would affect all road users, with either rapid transit system being implemented. The discussion continued in the media for a number of weeks and as the staff report was presented to Council, the focus shifted from a general discussion to an urgency that not only is a rapid transit system needed, but that the City should focus strictly on LRT. The general public opinion, as it played out in the media, was that it was no longer a question of if we should, but when and how we should proceed with an LRT system.

Following the approval of staff report PW08043 by City Council, staff was formally able to initiate a public consultation period. Immediately, the City set up a project website www.hamilton.ca/rapid-transit and a direct project e-mail rapidtransit@hamilton.ca. A notice (attached as Appendix A to PW08043a) for two Public Information Centres (PICs) appeared in all six (6) Brabant newspapers and The Hamilton Spectator on May 2, 2008, advertising of two identical public sessions which took place on Tuesday, May 6, 2008 at Sackville Hill Seniors Recreation Centre (mountain location adjacent to the proposed A-Line) and on Thursday, May 8, 2008 at the Board of Education Building (lower city location adjacent to the proposed B-Line). The notice was also published on the City's webpage and was picked up by numerous other media outlets through a Public Service Announcement (PSA).

Following the initiation of the public consultation period, Public Works staff began discussing the concept of both BRT and LRT rapid transit systems with the community,

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 7 of 20**

outlining the findings of the Feasibility Study and focusing on both the opportunities and constraints identified, but also focusing on innovative solutions that could be used in implementing a future system that would meet the needs of all users.

Staff consistently heard that the time is now for LRT and that the City must seize the opportunity to move forward and to not miss out on the opportunity at hand to construct a rapid transit system that would compete with other world class cities, all of which have some sort of rail oriented transportation system, particularly with the Province supporting this initiative and proposing funds towards its capital costs. Those in support of an LRT system believe that by pursuing this option, Hamilton would be considered a leader through the development of an innovative system, particularly through bridging the gap between the distinct areas of the City, particularly lower Hamilton with the Mountain. Although some public see the escarpment as an obstacle, many believe it to be an opportunity to create a true cosmopolitan city, if planned and designed appropriately. Staff agree that there is opportunity for a made in Hamilton solution to address the constraints identified in the Feasibility Study. Based on the feedback to date, the general public's belief was that a Light Rail Transit system could potentially breathe life into the economy of the City of Hamilton and that the issue of providing a rapid transit system in Hamilton was not a transit issue, but rather an issue of economic importance, revitalization and image changing.

The first public session that staff participated in was a presentation and discussion panel hosted by the Hamilton Light Rail grassroots interest group, held at the FRWY Café on May 1, 2008. This event was attended by more than 120 interested citizens. Staff presented some background information on rapid transit, the feasibility study and how to participate in the public consultation process. A representative of Hamilton Light Rail presented information on the benefits of light rail, showing examples of how the implementation of a light rail system in municipalities throughout North America and Europe has led these municipalities to an economic resurgence. The Region of Waterloo presented information on the EA process that they have followed that has led them to the point where they are looking at selecting their preferred corridor for rapid transit and their preferred mode. Initially, the Region of Waterloo evaluated nearly 50 routes (broken out over 7 corridor sections), using more than 20 evaluation criteria (grouped into 4 categories) and 10 technologies, including BRT, LRT, Monorail, Subway, Automated Guideway systems and MAGLEV.

Following the presentations, there was a question and answer session that provided great insight into the technologies available, the potential benefits of each technology and the process of getting from making a decision on technology to a ribbon cutting ceremony. In general, there was a sense of excitement from the crowd, a crowd that included young, old, disabled, families and business owners, and a hope that a rapid transit system for Hamilton could mean great things, particularly if it was an LRT system. Members of the audience also openly discussed how an LRT system has a greater potential to draw ridership, due to the negative image associated with any type of bus transit system, regardless of the efficiency of it.

The City Public Information Centres were held on May 6, 2008 and May 8, 2008, with the identical information presented at both the mountain and lower city location. Staff made a presentation at these meetings, which focused more on the technical aspects of what a rapid transit system would look like along the two corridors identified in the

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 8 of 20**

HTMP and MoveOntario 2020 plan. Question and answer periods were also held, that generated lively and dynamic conversations between both City staff and the general public, as well as amongst the public themselves. There were a number of issues raised in regards to the constraints that had been identified in the Feasibility Study, particularly in regards to the obstacle of using James Mountain Road for Light Rail and the notion of tunneling to gain access to the mountain. Staff have acknowledged that there is potential for innovation and made in Hamilton solutions to address these issues, including determining an alternate route and using alternative technologies, however, the purpose of the Feasibility Study was to ensure that the corridor being compared was the same for either BRT or LRT. Staff stressed that no decisions had been made at this time regarding the technology and heard from public that systems such as monorail and other elevated systems should also be considered. In addition, it was also stressed by staff that once a mode is selected, Class Environmental Assessment studies will still need to be undertaken, at which time alternative routing to connect the key nodes in the City can be considered. Although both the A-line and B-line routes were supported in terms of meeting the needs of the community, as starting routes for a rapid transit system, there is interest in extending the routes or connecting alternative routes to all areas of the City, including into Ancaster, Waterdown, Stoney Creek and even into Halton Region (Burlington). Other suggested roadways for future rapid transit corridors included Barton Street, Mohawk Road and Rymal Road (in general, a second east-west route on the Mountain is supported by the public). It was also noted that an improved HSR system would be required to tie into the rapid transit corridors, including service into presently under serviced areas.

Attendance at the public sessions ranged from residents of Ancaster and Glanbrook to downtown residents and potential investors, builders and stakeholder groups including the BIA's and the Realtors Association of Hamilton-Burlington. Media was also present at the public sessions held by Hamilton Light Rail and the City and comments are coming in through media outlets from as far as Kelowna, BC. The City of Victoria, BC has also contacted the City requesting a copy of the Terms of Reference that the feasibility study was undertaken as the Capital Region is in the early stages of undertaking their own Feasibility Study.

The media coverage of the public events continued to focus on the potential of a LRT system in Hamilton and the strong support for and LRT rapid transit system in Hamilton. There was also a focus on the Economic Summit that was held by the Chamber of Commerce on May 1, 2008, at which the key note speakers also addressed the need for a strong transportation system in Hamilton, and noted the potential impact of an LRT system over that of a BRT system. The potential for economic spin-offs, not only in terms of commercial investment in Hamilton, but in terms of the potential for new manufacturing opportunities given the cities industrial base has been discussed.

Hamilton is a unique City and staff believes that the delivery of a true high quality rapid transit system that is frequent, fast, reliable and comfortable will add one more dimension to a City that is different from that of the typical bedroom community that services the Toronto Area. Hamilton is a unique community, identified by its escarpment and waterfront and urban core. It is a community itself. Many of the public that attended the public sessions spoke of the potential of the City of Hamilton and how a LRT system will make the City even a more livable and desirable place to be, truly

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 9 of 20**

adding to the vision of Hamilton being the best place to raise a child, and meeting the strategic goals of the City.

A summary of what the City is hearing from the public through various means, including the formal comment sheets, e-mails and letters is attached as Appendix B. Although the public consultation process will continue, only comments received by the City prior to May 20, 2008 have been included in this staff report (due to internal circulation deadlines). It should be noted that, through the public consultation process, most wards are represented through attendance at the public sessions and/or completion of the comment sheets. Only Wards 9, 14 and 15 were not, although residents of these wards may have commented either through opportunities provided by various media outlets or submitted a comment sheet, but did not provide their name/address (10% of the comment sheets were submitted anonymously). At all of the public sessions and through the media blogs the overall public opinion of those responding to the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study is that of support for a rapid transit system (91%).

Table 1 provides an overall summary of public support for a Rapid Transit System and the mode which is preferred. There is overwhelming support for Light Rail Transit (71%) over Bus Rapid Transit (4%). Of those that commented (116 residents), 16% believed that either mode would be acceptable. Overall 91% of respondents believe that a rapid transit system, either LRT or BRT is required in Hamilton. The additional 9% of respondents that do not support either LRT or BRT is split between supporting another technology i.e. monorail or no system at all. Table 1 is the only summary table that includes all forms of comments received (letters, e-mails and comment sheets). All other tables only summarize the formal comment sheet responses that were received by the City by May 20, 2008.

Table 2 reveals that 90% of those that commented would not use a Bus Rapid Transit System, but would however utilize an LRT system.

Only 17% of respondents believe that the capital cost of the system is an important criterion when determining the mode that a rapid transit system should utilize. In determining what the most important criteria should be in determining if the system should be LRT or BRT, potential economic benefit (70%) and potential to attract new ridership (70%) were weighted the highest, followed by environmental impact (65%).

Table 4 provides more detail in regards to the funding of a rapid transit system and the support the respondents believe should be provided from other levels of government. In general, the respondents believe that the City shouldn't be responsible for much more than 50% of the capital costs of the system and that it should be shared between all three levels of government. This issues plays into the timing of Metrolinx funding (addressed in more detail later in PW08043a).

Table 5 shows that 86% of respondents support the corridors recommended for rapid transit and Table 6 shows that 96% would support additional routes or extensions to the corridors as proposed.

Overall, as revealed in the summary of the formal comment sheets, and the opinions revealed through the media and at the public sessions, there is support for a Rapid Transit System in general and for LRT more specifically. Where there is not support for a Rapid Transit System, it tends to be related to concern over the cost of the system and/or a sense that the system itself is not needed, that the transportation system

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 10 of 20**

should remain status quo. The idea of status quo however is in contravention of the City's Transportation Master Plan and Metrolinx's draft Regional Transportation Plan Green Papers and White Papers. Particularly, in regards to the continuing issues related to peak oil prices and the demand for environmentally sustainable transportation options, the general sense from the public is that the time is now for Hamilton to do something bold and innovative. The public feels that Hamilton, being included in with the Province's planning, needs to be aggressive in both going forward with its planning for rapid transit, but also be innovative in meeting the challenges that the provision of a light rail system might have. The potential lies not only in the development of a transit system but rather the development of the City itself.

It is not believed that a bus rapid transit system would have the same potential for economic prosperity of that of a light rail system and that a bus rapid system would not move the city forward in terms of meeting the goals and objectives of the policies that are included in GRIDS and the HTMP, as well as overall City visions i.e. the best place to raise a child.

There has been a lot of buzz in the community and excitement is continuing to build about the Rapid Transit initiative through the media, letters to the editor and through public consultation to date. Staff have developed a comprehensive communications plan to maintain this excitement in the community and keep rapid transit at the forefront of discussions over the next couple of months. As we move forward with the planning and implementation of a rapid transit initiative, staff are committed to communicating effectively and proactively with all stakeholders about the benefits of rapid transit, associated impacts/costs, and key decisions that are made and the future process. Most recently, staff have met with representatives of the Hamilton International Airport and the Hamilton Realtors Association of Hamilton-Burlington. Both organizations fully support the implementation of LRT systems along both corridors and their letters are attached as Appendix C and Appendix D respectively. Staff is also in contact with other stakeholder groups, including MacMaster University, HABIA and the Chamber of Commerce, attempting to make presentations to these groups, and others including Hamilton Health Sciences, Limeridge Mall and Eastgate Square, Mohawk College and the Poverty Roundtable, to ensure that their comments will be included in the follow-up report to Public Works Committee.

All future studies will include significant public consultation as well, that will go above and beyond the requirements of the EA process. The public will be engaged through a number of communication channels including the Rapid Transit website, media relations, advertisements, newsletters and facilitated workshops to gather feedback about rapid transit plans and the location of transit stations.

In general, to date based on all the feedback available to City staff, although there is support for general transit improvements, there is greater support for LRT over BRT or any other system. There is also a sentiment that a mixed system is still required to either address some of the technical issues or to provide improved service to both outlying areas and connector transit routes. There is a sense that LRT would have greater economic spinoffs, would have a better image and draw a larger ridership. In terms of the findings of the Feasibility Study, there is concern over the how the operating costs are reported (per vehicle). Staff have agreed to have operating costs broken down on a per passenger basis as opposed to per vehicle basis as part of future

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 11 of 20**

studies, given that LRT vehicles can accommodate double the passengers per vehicle. There is also a general sense from the community that although the capital costs of LRT is much greater than BRT, there is opportunity to reduce the cost of LRT through the type of technology that is implemented as well as how some of the constraints to the LRT system are implemented (i.e. alternative routing vs. tunneling). The general public does however still tend to agree that LRT is the preferred system, particularly due to the potential for funding from both the Provincial and Federal governments.

On-going discussions with Metrolinx have also been taking place in regards to both the Regional Transportation Master Plan that the Province is developing in support of the MoveOntario 2020 vision, as well capital funding requirements, funding timing and operating cost discussions. Most recently, Metrolinx has advised that their first five (5) year rolling Capital Plan is expected to be released in November 2008. It is important that Hamilton be included in the first cut of this Plan. As a result of the importance in providing Metrolinx the information they require for the development of their five year capital plan, direction from Public Works Committee and Council on the type of Rapid Transit to pursue is key prior to the fall. The City needs to provide Metrolinx with a commitment towards moving forward with the implementation of a rapid transit system for Hamilton prior to the development of the provincial funding plan for 2009 – 2013. To meet this deadline, staff will report back to Public Works Committee no later than September 2008 with a proposed workplan for future studies, design and construction for Public Works Committee's consideration and endorsement.

In addition, staff will continue to work with Metrolinx on the development of their Regional Transportation Plan for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, which supports the need for the two identified rapid transit corridors in Hamilton. Staff continue to hear from Metrolinx that they are impressed and pleased with the progress that Hamilton is making in moving towards the implementation of a rapid transit system and that they continue to look forward to working with the City in determining the details of the system and cost sharing arrangements. Most recently, Metrolinx sponsored the Metronauts "un"conference about transportation issues that was held at McMaster University, and attended by the General Manager, Public Works. Rapid transit was a topic at this event as well.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:

Alternative 1 - Continue with the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study continuing to review the opportunities and constraints of both Light Rail Transit and Bus Rapid Transit

As noted above, there is significant public interest in rapid transit and sustainable transportation in Hamilton, with a strong preference for LRT. Continuing to focus on both technologies (BRT and LRT) has potential to delay making recommendations in terms of a workplan for implementation into Metrolinx's five year capital plan. This alternative is not recommended.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications, at this stage, with regards to the two recommendations of this report.

Estimated costs, to allow for order of magnitude comparisons, were provided in PW08043.

Staff will pursue funding from Metrolinx and from other Provincial or Federal programs as appropriate.

It should also be stressed that there are opportunities for positive financial implications resulting from the implementation of a rapid transit network, including new development, redevelopment and assessment growth.

Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications associated with the recommendations of this report, but there could be significant staffing implications associated with providing rapid transit in Hamilton.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

Provincial Policies

Metrolinx is developing a **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), including the Cities of Hamilton and Toronto, and the Regions of Durham, York, Peel and Halton. While it is still draft, and not officially a policy document, the Regional Transportation Plan will provide a strategic, long-term vision for a coordinated transportation system across the GTHA and will guide decision making about future infrastructure investments.

The first stage of the RTP process was the development of Green Papers. Seven Green Papers were released for public comment, including:

- Towards Sustainable Transportation
- Mobility Hubs
- Active Transportation
- Transportation Demand Management
- Highways and Roads
- Transit
- Moving Goods and Delivering Services

The Green Papers were reviewed by an Advisory Committee and a Multi-Disciplinary Expert Review Panel. The Green Papers became White Papers (White Paper #1 – Vision, Goals and Objectives and White Paper #2 – Preliminary Directions and Concepts), which were released May 8, 2008. The papers are open for public comment till July 10, 2008 and staff plans on submitting a consolidated set of comments that will involve Public Works, Planning and Economic Development and Public Health. The

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 13 of 20**

White Papers will be followed by a draft RTP, then a Final RTP. The draft RTP is anticipated in July 2008 and the Final RTP is expected in the fourth quarter of 2008.

The RTP is built around *Places to Grow - A Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* and the Urban Growth Centres (UGC's) identified in *Places to Grow*. Places to Grow supports revitalized downtowns and urban areas, and sets minimum density targets in order to support increased transit usage, and financial viability of transit; a key theme that is carried through the Green Papers. The Green Papers recognize that, to meet the growth targets set in *Places to Grow*, an integrated and sustainable transportation will be required, as will a plan to guide future infrastructure investments

In June 2007, the Province of Ontario announced their \$17.5 billion **MoveOntario 2020** plan which will deliver 52 rapid transit projects, including 2 rapid transit lines for Hamilton. The "quick win" projects for the B-Line and the A-Line are on MoveOntario 2020 corridors.

Hamilton Policies

The Hamilton **Transportation Master Plan (TMP)** identified 3 routes for future rapid transit: the existing B-Line along the Main/King corridor from Eastgate Square to McMaster University, the James/Upper James corridor from Downtown to the Airport (now known as the A-Line), and an east-west Mountain route. The Hamilton Transportation Master Plan also sets goals of 20% reduction in vehicle kilometres travelled over current trends by 2031, and increasing the modal share for transit to 15% by 2031: providing rapid transit will help achieve these goals, as well as the goals of reducing single occupancy vehicle use and encouraging the use of transit and active transportation. Active transportation, in turn, can lead to improved overall health.

The Hamilton Transportation Master Plan (and the Master Plans for Water and Wastewater, and for Stormwater) was completed as part of the **GRIDS** process. GRIDS identified a "Nodes and Corridors" approach as the preferred growth strategy. The A-Line and B-Line are primary corridors connecting key nodes, including Downtown, McMaster University, Mohawk College, and Hamilton International Airport.

Key theme areas of **Vision 2020** which are supported by providing rapid transit are: Local Economy, Consuming Less Energy, Improving Air Quality, Changing our Mode of Transportation, Land Use in the Urban Area, Personal Health and Well-Being, and Community Well-Being and Capacity Building.

The guiding principles of the **Hamilton Transit Ridership Growth Plan** are supportive of providing rapid transit in Hamilton. These guiding principles are:

- The need to improve services and safety for existing riders so they become ambassadors for transit;
- Adoption of strategic approach that considers transit's role in the larger transportation, social, economic and environmental context, including the ability for transit to facilitate the City's growth management objectives and policies for a more balanced transportation system;
- The need to pursue initiatives that are cost-effective with high visibility, and those that improve the image of the transit system;
- The benefits of marketing the transit system as an important city service and one that requires attention to position Hamilton for future economic success,

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 14 of 20**

community well-being, affordability for passengers and environmental sustainability.

Public Works Strategic Plan

Participating in the Regional Transportation Plan process helps us to achieve our strategic priority of being the leader in the “greening” and stewardship of the City. Providing rapid transit will improve air quality and the environment through the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and the reduction of single occupancy vehicle use.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

To date, consultation on the Rapid Transit Feasibility Study 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)

Staff has also met regularly with Ward 1 Councillor Brian McHattie, and Mayor Eisenberger and his staff as well as providing an opportunity to all Councillors to sit down one-on-one with Rapid Transit Project staff to discuss issues and concerns related to the information presented to date. Staff met personally with 7 area Councillors.

In total, between the three public sessions that were attended by staff, nearly 300 citizens were engaged in the Rapid Transit discussions that place and 91% of the public involved in the discussions are in support of Rapid Transit, with 71% supporting Light Rail Transit and 16% supporting either technology. Only 4% support a BRT system. This grouping of individuals was a cross-section of young, old, disabled, present transit users and potential transit users and represented 10 of the 15 wards that make-up the City of Hamilton.

Given the excitement that is building about the Rapid Transit initiative, staff believes that it is important to the process to keep rapid transit at the forefront of community discussions over the next couple of months. Staff is committed to communicating effectively and proactively with all stakeholders and the community and will continue to encourage feedback. Staff is available to attend Ward meetings should Councillors request this.

Public Works staff will also continue to involve Planning and Economic Development and Transit 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.

Staff will also be contacting other municipalities across North America to discuss their systems, the implementation of each system, the resulting economic benefits and overall impacts to their communities. The Rapid Transit project team believe that valuable lessons can be learnt from those that have implemented rapid transit systems,

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 15 of 20**

what worked, what didn't work and what are the true community impacts. Planning and Economic Development will also be part of these discussions. The results will be summarized in the next report to Public Works Committee.

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the "Triple Bottom Line", (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. Yes No

Community well-being is enhanced through the support of increased use of transit and other sustainable modes of transportation. Public health is improved through a reduction in emissions and an increase in active transportation.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. Yes No

A sustainable transportation network provides many options for the movement of people; single-occupancy vehicle-dependency is reduced.

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. Yes No

Compact, mixed use development minimizes land consumption and servicing costs. Rapid Transit lines can initiate higher levels of economic development.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines?

Yes No

Municipal Class EA process by its very nature considers natural, social and economic impact.

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants?

Yes No

Appendix A - Public Notice

Rapid Transit Feasibility Study - Corridor Analysis
East – West Corridor on King Street/Main Street/Queenston Road
Central North-South Corridor on James Street/Upper James Street

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE

THE STUDY

The City of Hamilton has initiated a Rapid Transit Feasibility Study to identify the opportunities and implications of introducing exclusive transit operation along two main transportation corridors within the City of Hamilton. These corridors were identified for higher order transit as part of the City's Transportation Master Plan (2007) and were identified by the Province as part of the Rapid Transit Action Plan in Move Ontario 2020.

In order to first determine the type of Rapid Transit (light rail or bus) to be implemented within the corridors established in the Transportation Master Plan, a feasibility study is being undertaken to identify the physical implications together with the costs and construction impacts of implementation. This study will present the following:

- corridor constraints and opportunities analysis;
- review of rapid transit technologies; and
- functional plans identifying potential property requirements, impacts on parking, pedestrians, traffic operations, staging and costs.

THE PROCESS

This project is being carried out as a Feasibility Study and is not subject to the Class Environmental Assessment process (at this stage), however a key component of the study is to engage the public and receive feedback on both the desired mode of rapid transit and outline the opportunities and implications of each.

A Public Information Centre (PIC) will be held, at two separate locations, during the study to present the project and receive public feedback on the type of Rapid Transit that should be pursued. The same information will be presented at each PIC location.

Upon completion of the feasibility study, Council will direct staff in regards to which mode to pursue and the required Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) will be initiated. The Class EA will include additional opportunities for public input on the implementation aspects of a Rapid Transit System.

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE (PIC)

Public Information Centres for this Rapid Transit Feasibility Study are scheduled at the following locations on the dates noted:

DATE: Tuesday, May 6, 2008
TIME: 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, Presentation at 7:00 pm
LOCATION: Sackville Hill Seniors Recreation Centre
780 Upper Wentworth St.

DATE: Thursday, May 8, 2008
TIME: 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, Presentation at 7:00 pm
LOCATION: Board of Education
100 Main Street West

If you have any questions or comments or wish to be added to the study mailing list, please contact:

Jillian Stephen, P. Eng.
Project Manager
Capital Planning & Implementation
Public Works, City of Hamilton
Phone: 905-546-2424 ext. 6392
rapidtransit@hamilton.ca

The project website: www.hamilton.ca/rapid-transit

Information will be collected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.

This Notice issued May 2, 2008.

Appendix B – Public Opinion Summary Tables

Table 1: Overall Support of Rapid Transit System (116 Responses)

	LRT	BRT	Either One	Neither
Comment Sheets	72%	6%	14%	8%
E-mails	88%	0	6%	6%
Letters	0	0	80%	20%
Total	71%	4%	16%	9%

Table 2: Would the type of Rapid Transit System implemented affect how you choose to travel?

	LRT	BRT
NOT travel on	10%	90%

Table 3: Preferred Mode Selection Criteria

Criteria	%
Potential Economic Benefit	70
Potential to Attract New Ridership	70
Environmental Impact	65
Sustainability	55
Operating Cost	34
Life Cycle Analysis	32
Construction Cost	17
Vehicle Cost	14
Other	14

Table 4: Is funding a concern to you if the capital costs of construction are:

	Yes	No	Maximum % cost to the City (avg)
Funded entirely by either the Province and/or the Federal Government?	20%	80%	
Funded entirely by the City?	47%	53%	
Shared between all three levels of Government?	26%	74%	54%

Table 5: Do you support the recommended rapid transit routes?

A-Line James/Upper James (north/south) Only	1%
B-Line Main/King (east/west) Only	13%
Both	86%

Table 6: Would you be in favour of implementing additional rapid transit routes in the future, once the recommended routes are established?

	Yes	No
Additional Future Routes	96%	4%

Appendix C – Hamilton Airport Correspondence



RAPID TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY (RTFS)
City of Hamilton
Public Information Centre
May 6 and May 8, 2008

COMMENT SHEET

The City of Hamilton has initiated a Rapid Transit Feasibility Study (RTFS) to identify the opportunities and implications of introducing exclusive transit operation along two main transportation corridors. These corridors were identified for higher order transit as part of the City's Transportation Master Plan (2007) and were identified by the Province as part of the Rapid Transit Action Plan in MoveOntario 2020.

Your comments are important to this planning process and this comment sheet is intended to gather information on the public's areas of concern and their preferences. **Please take a moment to complete this questionnaire and deposit it in the "comment sheet" box or send it to the address on the back of this sheet. All comments received by May 20, 2008 will be included in a report back to Public Works Committee in regards to public consultation.** Thank you.

Please answer the following questions about what you consider to be important when considering a Rapid Transit system for the City of Hamilton. (Please Print)

1. Do you support the idea of implementing of a rapid transit system in the City of Hamilton?
Please identify why or why not.

The John C Munroe Hamilton International Airport and the Airport Tenants Operations Committee fully support implementing rapid transit system in the City of Hamilton. The key reason being that rapid transit is an economic driver for growth. In cities like Toronto and Calgary, the use of rapid transit has led to the development of economic nodes at each of the stops. Other Cities like Boston and Chicago have also experience a positive re-emergence of areas once rapid transit was included.

2. If you do support a rapid transit system, which mode would you prefer?

Light Rail Only Rapid Bus Only Either One

3. Would the type of rapid transit system (i.e. light rail or bus) implemented impact how you choose to travel?

Yes, as I would NOT choose to travel on: Light Rail Rapid Bus

No, as I would use either Light Rail or Rapid Bus

No, as I would NOT use either Light Rail or Rapid Bus

4. What are the criteria that the selection of the preferred mode should be based on?

Environmental Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential to Attract New Ridership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Life Cycle Analysis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential Economic Benefit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other:	
Construction Cost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Vehicle Cost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	
Operating Cost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	

5. Do you support the recommended routes for rapid transit?

A Line - James/Upper James B Line - Main/King Both
(north/south) (east/west)

6. Would you be in favour of implementing additional rapid transit routes in the future, once the recommended routes are established?

Yes No

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 19 of 20**

7. Would you prefer to see the initial routes elsewhere in the City? (please explain)

No. The Airport is a 24 hour operation and employees need reliable service to get them to and from work. This would also expand the number of people with access to these jobs. Airport jobs on average pay a 25% premium to the average salaries of the region.

The airport is expanding and the passenger load is expected to rise to 5million. This would create 21000 new jobs at the airport.

The airport economic lands are expected to generate between 30,000 and 50,000 new jobs. This is over and above the previous figure.

8. Do you believe that there would be greater economic spinoffs if one mode was to be implemented over the other (i.e. if light rail was implemented over bus)? What could some of these economic spinoffs be? (please explain)

Yes No

As mentioned in question 1, Light rail has proven to be an economic driver and has lead to significant employment growth and property value increases in the cities it was implemented.

9. It is assumed at this time that all operating costs will be the responsibility of the City of Hamilton. Is the funding of a rapid transit system a concern to you if the **CAPITAL COSTS** (construction) are:

Funded entirely by either the Province and/or the Federal Governments?

Yes No

Funded entirely by the City of Hamilton?

Yes No

Shared between all three levels of government?

Yes No

What is the maximum percentage of the costs that the City of Hamilton should be expected to assume? 33%

Other Comments

The Hamilton International Airport supports the need for Light Rail and Rapid Bus services throughout the City. The initial routes of an east /west corridor from McMaster to Downtown and out to Centennial Parkway and the north / south route from James to Upper James and terminating The Airport would be complimented by expansion down the road. The key issue is that this should be part of an overall plan for the movement of GOODS and well as PEOPLE.

The employment lands surrounding the airport the growth expected within the airport itself represent in excess of 50,000 new jobs for the region. Transportation will allow a greater population to have access to this employment opportunity.

Name: Steve Howse, Director Communications, Hamilton International Airport
Address: 9300 Airport Rd
Mount Hope
E-mail: showse@flyhi.ca

x I would like to be added to a rapid transit mailing list (should one be formed for future studies).
All comment sheets to be returned by May 20, 2008

Jillian Stephen, Manager
Strategic Planning
City of Hamilton
77 James Street North, Suite 302
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 2K3
Ph. 905-546-2424 ext. 6392
Fax: 905-546-4435
Email: rapidtransit@hamilton.ca

Project Website
www.hamilton.ca/rapid-transit

To fulfil Environmental Assessment Act requirements, we will maintain your comments on file for use during this Study and may include them in Study documentation. With the exception of personal information, all comments received will become part of the public record.

**SUBJECT: Rapid Transit Feasibility Study update
(PW08043a) - (City Wide) - Page 20 of 20**

Appendix D – Realtors Association of Hamilton-Burlington



RECEIVED MAY 20 2008

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