



**CITY OF HAMILTON**

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
*Transportation Division*

and

**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
*Growth Management Division*

<b>TO:</b> Mayor and Members General Issues Committee	<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b> CITY WIDE
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b> October 16, 2013	
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b> Niagara to Greater Toronto Area (NGTA) Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment Study - Phase 1, Final Transportation Development Strategy (PW13020(a)/PED13044(a)) - (City Wide)	
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b> Gerry Davis, CMA General Manager Public Works Department  Tim McCabe General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department	<b>PREPARED BY:</b>  Alan Kirkpatrick (905) 546-2424, Extension 4173  Diana Morreale (905) 546-2424, Extension 4101
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

- (a) That the General Manager of Public Works and the General Manager of Planning and Economic Development be authorized to forward Report (PW13020(a)/PED13044(a)) to the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) as the City of Hamilton's response to the Ministry's Niagara to GTA (NGTA) Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment Study;

- (b) That the City of Hamilton continue to work with MTO on strategic transportation planning for this area to support the future corridor planning through the study area;
- (c) That the City of Hamilton encourages the MTO to immediately begin developing Terms of Reference for a corridor study through the central and west areas to determine when a new corridor is required and options where it should be located;
- (d) That the City of Hamilton work with MTO to collaboratively develop the Terms of Reference for the central and west area corridor study;
- (e) That the City of Hamilton continues to work with the Municipal Caucus to accelerate new collaborations and relationships to support the City's prosperity.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Inter-regional transportation plays an important role in the prosperity of Hamilton. There are a number of provincial transportation initiatives underway, which staff are recommending continued involvement from the City of Hamilton, to ensure municipal interests are addressed now and into the future.

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has been studying the future transportation network transportation needs between Niagara Region and the Greater Toronto Area (see Appendix 'A'). MTO has followed the Environmental Assessment (EA) process and in September 2013 released the final Transportation Development Strategy (TDS) that has been approved by the Minister of Transportation. The TDS is now out for a 60 day public review and comment period ending on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The final recommendations in the TDS are based on a "Building Block" (see Appendix 'B') approach and include the following:

- Group 1 - Optimize Existing Networks
- Group 2 - New/Expanded Non-Road Infrastructure
- Group 3 - Widen/Improve Roads
- Group 4 - New Transportation Corridors

The MTO's forecasts and projections in the TDS have indicated that the transportation network will be adequate up to the study's design year (2031). However, the TDS report indicates that beyond 2031 the NGTA transportation network will likely be over capacity and experiencing significant congestion. The TDS also goes on to recommend a future transportation study to determine how to meet long term needs. MTO has indicated that the future study will include an expanded study area to the west (see Appendix 'C') and a new planning horizon of 2041 or later. City staff feels the 2031 planning horizon used in the TDS is a critical error in MTO's NGTA analysis and suggests that a planning horizon of 2041 or later should have been utilized in this Phase 1 study as a better indicator of the future transportation needs and on which to base planning decisions.

The City proposes that a new corridor from the Niagara area through Hamilton linking to the GTA West area should be identified as part of the TDS recommendations and not pushed off to another future study. A new NGTA corridor is a key priority for the economic prosperity of the City, surrounding Regions, and the Province. The City of Hamilton has identified that this lack of transportation network planning will have consequences to the area Regions located in the study area. City staff recommend that MTO begin developing a Terms of Reference for a new Central Area and West Area Study to determine when a new corridor is required and where it should be located.

The City of Hamilton, Regions of Niagara, Halton, Peel, and Waterloo have joined forces through a collaborative Municipal Caucus to champion and work with Provincial and Federal governments to see our unified vision of a long term plan and strategy that would connect the NGTA corridor to the GTA West Corridor. The Caucus is currently developing a Project Charter and Governance Structure. The City of Hamilton should actively continue to work with the Caucus to further our interests.

#### **FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial:** N/A

**Staffing:** N/A

**Legal:** N/A

#### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Several staff reports regarding the Niagara to Greater Toronto Area (NGTA) have been presented to Council. The reports and a summary of Council resolutions are as follows:

##### **September 20, 2007**

- On July 12, 2006, City Council approved the participation in a joint study with the Niagara Region Economic Development Corporation to prepare an economic impact analysis of developing a transportation corridor from the GTA to the Niagara Region. The Study identified both the economic benefits of building the proposed NGTA Corridor and the lost opportunity costs of doing nothing.

##### **February 25, 2008 - PW08025**

- MTO maintain contact with the City with respect to this project on an on-going basis for the duration of the study.

##### **September 14, 2010 - PW05054(a)/PED10213**

- NGTA multi modal corridor must be identified as the preferred option
- Supported concept of optimizing the existing transportation network
- Supported concept of new/expanded non-road infrastructure
- Concerns with widening Highway 403

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- Concerns that there is no direct transportation system connection from Niagara to the Airport Employment Growth District (AEGD) area
- Would like MTO to confirm Right-of-way needs for Highway 6 adjacent to the AEGD
- Concerns with increasing congestion of roadways under the City jurisdiction without consideration for operational and maintenance costs
- MTO provide a presentation to Council before finalizing study
- Concerns on impacts of Niagara to GTA corridor on Flamborough

**May 9, 2011 - PW05054(b)/PED10213(a)**

- Construction of NGTA multi-modal corridor be identified as the preferred option and MTO continue to accelerate their investigation
- The appropriate location for the corridor excludes Flamborough Wards 14 and 15 and North Burlington
- Supports optimizing the existing transportation network
- Supports new/expanded non-road infrastructure with specific emphasis on:
  - GO extension to downtown Hamilton
  - Port infrastructure
  - Promote expansions at Hamilton International Airport
  - Hamilton focused inter-regional transit service
  - Transit-supportive highway corridor improvements
  - Inter-regional Transit links between Hamilton and other urban centres
- Concerns with widening Hwy 403
- Concerns that there is no direct transportation system connection from Niagara to the AEGD area
- Would like MTO to confirm ROW needs for Highway 6 adjacent to the AEGD
- Concerns with increasing congestion of roadways under the City jurisdiction without consideration for operational and maintenance costs

**March 20, 2013 - PW13020/PED13044**

- Support for staff to participate in future studies identified through the NGTA Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment Study Phase 1 for the West and Central areas
- The City of Hamilton updates their 2005 Goods Movement Study
- Staff participates in the Inter-Regional Strategic Economic Logistics Corridors and Gateway Connections Municipal Caucus

Representatives from the MTO and their consultants, URS Canada Inc., also made presentations on the status of the study at this meeting

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS/LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

The recommendation requesting staff to participate in future NGTA studies and to be involved with the Inter-Regional Strategic Economic Logistics Corridors and Gateway Connections Municipal Caucus aligns with our Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015.

Strategic objective 3.1 of the Corporate Strategic Plan states:

Engage in a range of intergovernmental relations (IGR) work that will advance partnerships and projects that benefit the City of Hamilton. This includes Strategic Actions:

- (i) Develop an intergovernmental relations strategy to promote City priorities.
- (ii) Adopt infrastructure, transportation, housing, downloading and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) as initial priority areas relative to intergovernmental relations advocacy, finding priorities and grant programs.

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

The City has been participating in discussions with the Regions of Halton, Niagara, Peel and Waterloo, and the City of Burlington and Southern Ontario Gateway Council to accelerate new collaborations and relationships for the long-term economic growth of the western area of the Golden Horseshoe through the development of a NGTA transportation and trade corridor that would connect to the GTA West Corridor.

Report PW13020/PED13044 gave staff the direction to work with the above listed Regions in the creation of a Municipal Caucus in order to develop a multi-disciplinary partnerships to plan, approve, fund and build the infrastructure needed for the area, recognizing benefits of working together and with the private sector.

City staff has been working on a Municipal Caucus charter and governance model. The Municipal Caucus' ultimate goal is to establish an integrated multi-modal goods movement network that:

- Addresses existing highway capacity issues,
- Maximizes potential non-road based modes,
- Efficiently links employment lands and markets,
- Provides redundancy to reduce impacts of collisions or maintenance construction work,
- Addresses sensitive natural heritage, social, cultural and environmental areas,
- Is planned and implemented in partnership with municipalities, the province, the federal government and the private sector.

Staff is recommending continued participation in the Municipal Caucus to further our interests.

## **ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has been studying the future transportation network transportation needs between Niagara Region and the Greater Toronto Area. MTO has followed the Environmental Assessment (EA) process and in September 2013 released the final Transportation Development Strategy (TDS) that has been approved by the Minister of Transportation. The TDS is now out for a sixty (60) day public review and comment period ending on November 4, 2013. The final recommendations in the

TDS are based on a “Building Block” approach (see Appendix ‘B’) and include the following:

- Group 1 - Optimize Existing Networks
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The building block approach proposes to have Group 1 and Group 2 recommendations be implemented first and serve as the foundation for Group 3 and 4 recommendations.

**Group 1 (Optimize Existing Networks) includes:**

- By-Pass Shoulders
- Incident/Congestion Monitoring
- Ramp Metering
- High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/Transit Bypass Lanes
- Speed Harmonization
- Contra-Flow Lanes
- Support Metrolinx/Smart Commute
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs

**Group 2 (New/Expanded Non-Road Infrastructure) includes:**

- Hamilton-Focused Inter-Regional Transit Service
- Linking Urban Areas through Inter-Regional Transit
- Support Rail Initiatives
- Support Marine Goods Movement

The City of Hamilton supports the recommendations of Groups 1 and 2 and recommends that these measures be implemented as soon as possible especially commencing study work on the “inter-regional, Hamilton focused transit service” (see Appendix ‘B’). According to *Places to Grow* Hamilton will be a significant employment node in coming years. So it will be important to provide an opportunity for transit choice to commuters in outlying municipalities to Downtown Hamilton and outlying business parks during the morning and evening rush hours. The “inter-regional, Hamilton focused transit service” aligns with City of Hamilton’s strategic objective 1.4 “*Improve the City’s transportation system to support multi-modal mobility and encourage inter-regional connections*”.

In 2008, the Province of Ontario finalized their Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), referred to as the “BIG MOVE”, identifying their strategic, long-term vision for coordinating transportation across the entire Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). The RTP emphasizes the movement of people and goods over the single-occupant vehicles (SOV). The plan identifies choices for reliable, convenient transit opportunities, improved active transportation options and improved efficiency of the movement of goods and services on the transportation network.

For issues dealing with public transit in the BIG MOVE, the City's previously approved "Rapid Ready" Report (PW13014) has been submitted to Metrolinx and should be integrated into Group 1 and 2 recommendations.

### **Group 3 (Widen and Improve Roads)**

- The Highway 403 Hamilton - widen by two lanes from King Street/Main Street to Jerseyville;
  - Daily congestion on Highway 403 from Ancaster to Highway 6 North requires immediate attention from the MTO to provide the necessary capacity to reduce delays and improve access to area highways and destinations
- Highway 403 Oakville - widen by three lanes from the Ford Plant to 407 ETR;
- 407 ETR - widen by two lanes between the Freeman Interchange and Highway 403 interchange in Oakville;
- QEW Halton - widen by two lanes between the Freeman Interchange over the Burlington Bay Skyway to the Red Hill Valley Parkway interchange;
  - Daily congestion on the QEW from the Freeman Interchange to the Hamilton-Niagara boundary significantly impedes trade and commerce to municipalities and border crossing points. The MTO needs to immediately initiate the next corridor study phases and Environmental Assessments to improve these conditions including the consideration of a new corridor from the Niagara Region along the southerly portion of Hamilton to points east either through the Region of Halton or in a north-east direction towards Highway 401. The widening of the QEW corridor from Hamilton to the Niagara area requires special consideration of farm lands and tender-fruit farms.
- Highway 6 (South) - widen by two lanes between Hamilton Airport and Highway 403.
  - The City fully supports this initiative and encourages the MTO to undertake the necessary studies and Environmental Assessments to implement this widening as soon as possible.

The highway recommendations listed above do not address the longer term needs of the NGTA study area, 2041 and beyond. Our current routes for goods movement in the Western Golden Horseshoe are the QEW and 403/401, both of which are congested. The draft 2041 growth projections released by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) show Western Golden Horseshoe's population growing at three (3) times the rate of Toronto and employment growing at four (4) times the rate of Toronto. The current MTO process for highway planning does not factor in 2041 future growth projections being mandated by MMAH. MTO's current transportation plans do not address capacity needs to 2031 let alone 2041. The planning horizon of 2031 needs to be extended to 2041 to meet the objectives and targets of the current Provincial Growth Plan and a streamlined EA process for highway/transportation network planning is required.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

Committee and Council may choose not to participate in the Municipal Caucus. This is not recommended as Hamilton holds a key position in the Greater Golden Horseshow Corridor and will greatly benefit by a collaborative approach to inter-regional transportation.

**ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 - 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Strategic Priority #1**

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

*WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.*

**Strategic Objective**

- 1.1 Continue to grow the non-residential tax base.
- 1.2 Continue to prioritize capital infrastructure projects to support managed growth and optimize community benefit.
- 1.3 Promote economic opportunities with a focus on Hamilton's downtown core, all downtown areas and waterfronts.
- 1.4 Improve the City's transportation system to support multi-modal mobility and encourage inter-regional connections.
- 1.6 Enhance Overall Sustainability (financial, economic, social and environmental).

**Strategic Priority #2**

Valued & Sustainable Services

*WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner.*

**Strategic Objective**

- 2.3 Enhance customer service satisfaction.

**APPENDICES / SCHEDULES**

Appendix "A"	NGTA Study Area
Appendix "B"	NGTA Building Block Approach
Appendix "C"	NGTA Future Study Area
Appendix "D"	NGTA Inter-regional, Hamilton Focused Transit Service



**NGTA Study Area**

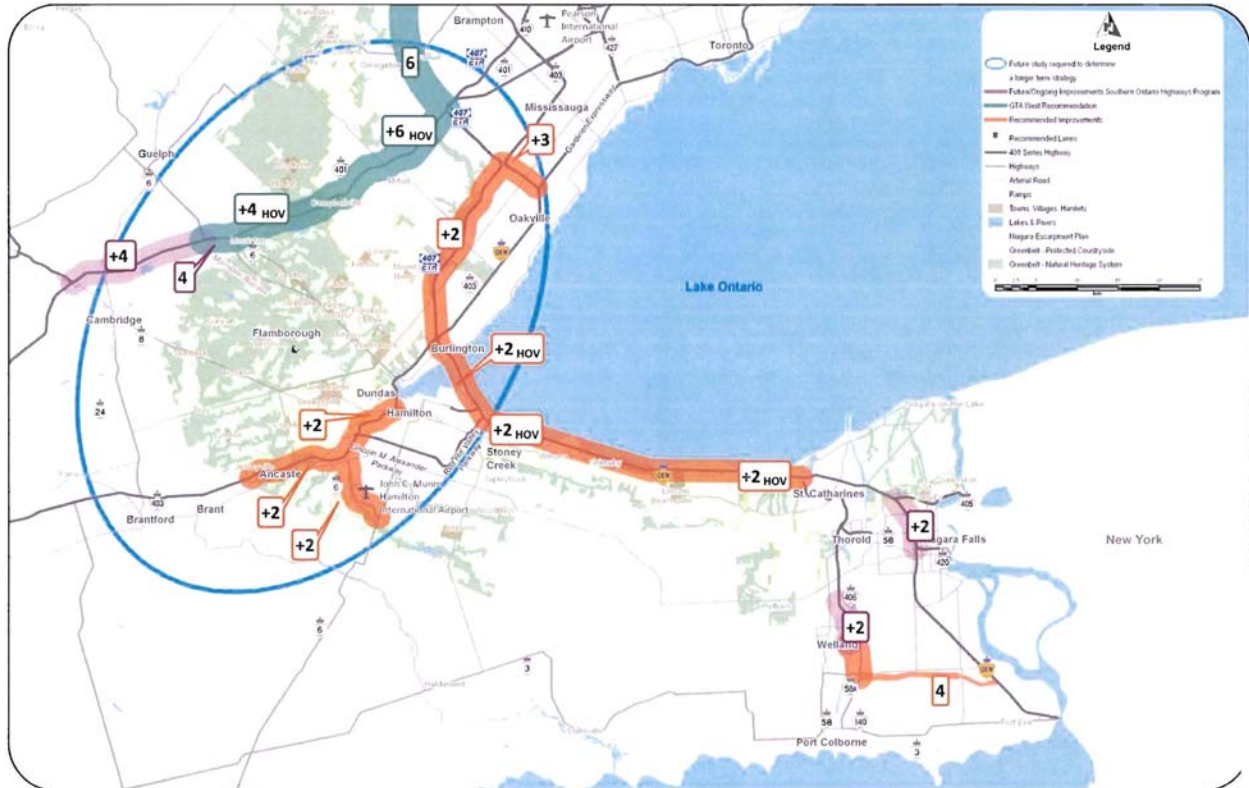


**NGTA Building Blocks**

Exhibit E-1: The "Building Block" Approach



**NGTA Future Study Area**



**NGTA Inter-regional, Hamilton Focused Transit Service**

