



# INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	January 15, 2020
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	LRT/Provincial Task Force Update (PED20033) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
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<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

## COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not applicable.

## INFORMATION

On December 16, 2019, the Minister of Transportation, the Honourable Caroline Mulroney, announced the cancellation of the Hamilton B-Line LRT project and ended the on-going procurement process. The Minister cited rising costs as the primary reason for cancelling the project.

As part of the announcement, the Minister stated that the Province was still committed to improving transit in Hamilton and confirmed a new investment of \$1 Billion in funding towards future transit and transportation projects. The Minister also noted that a Task Force would be created to help guide decision making and ultimately recommend how the funding should be allocated and to which projects. Although no formal invitation or correspondence has been received from the Province outlining the purpose, scope or governance of the Task Force, the City has been told that it will be comprised of five “non-elected community members”, including one City representative; most likely the City Manager. The City has also been told that the Task Force will report directly to the Minister of Transportation and that recommendations are expected by the end of February 2020.

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OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

Given the lack of formal communication and details from the Province regarding the Task Force, many questions related to funding allocation, project eligibility and Council's role in decision making (as well as many others) remain unanswered. Staff continue to work with Ministry of Transportation staff to clarify these matters and better define how this process will move forward. As the situation remains fluid, additional information will be provided to Council and the public as it becomes available.

With respect to the LRT project, staff continue to work with Metrolinx on an appropriate and cooperative "wind down" plan. Cancelling a project of this magnitude mid-stream presents a unique set of challenges and questions. The City's LRT Project Office (LRTPO) is working to resolve these matters and provide greater clarification on current and future processes and impacts affecting stakeholders along the corridor. To date, the most common questions being received from the public are related to property matters and tenant support. To assist in this regard, the LRTPO is preparing a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document specifically relating to the project cancellation that will be posted on our website and shared more broadly through our various social media channels. As always, the LRTPO Communications & Engagement team will be available to address issues/concerns and provide support on a more individual and personal level while we navigate this transition.

For context, and as a reminder, approximately 90 full property purchases and 300 partial property purchases (a few metres or less) were required along the LRT corridor for construction. Prior to the project's cancellation, 60 full properties had been purchased; 15 of which were residential in nature (containing 55 residential units). Of the residential units acquired, 40 were occupied and housed a total of 66 tenants. Housing was successfully found for 45 of these tenants while the remainder are still living in Metrolinx-owned properties. It's important to note that these numbers pre-date the project's cancellation. To verify these numbers, staff have asked Metrolinx for an updated copy of their property database and to confirm the exact number of residential units, occupied and unoccupied, under their care and control.

With respect to the future of the property acquired along the corridor, Metrolinx has not provided any information or direction on how this property will be handled (retained, developed, disposed etc.) or if the City will be involved in this process. Until a strategy is developed, Metrolinx will continue to own, monitor, maintain and secure all properties under their ownership.

From a staffing perspective, while no lay-offs have taken place to date, job losses are inevitable and will most likely start in early February and be complete by the end of March. It's difficult at this time to estimate how many of the 40 City staff assigned to the project will ultimately be affected. Transition and support plans for affected staff are in development and continue to evolve.

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Staff will continue to update Council and the public as more information becomes available.