




Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Light Rail Transit Sub-Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 23, 2024
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton Light Rail Transit Partial Property Acquisition Update (PED24083) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Ana Cruceru (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5707
SUBMITTED BY:	Abdul Shaikh Director, Hamilton LRT Project Office Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not applicable.

INFORMATION

In 2021, City Council ratified a new Memorandum of Understanding with Metrolinx and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) which references the previous Project Specific Output Specifications completed before the cancellation of the previous iteration of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) project in 2019. The Project Specific Output Specifications included the target pedestrian zone width of 3.0m on each side of the LRT corridor comprised of a 2.5m urban braille sidewalk and a 0.5m furnishing zone.

In 2022, City Council approved the 'Complete Streets Design Manual' which sets out a "minimum" desired required width of 4.75m for the pedestrian zone comprised of a buffer zone, street tree/furniture zone, walkway zone and frontage zone for areas with higher pedestrian volumes.

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.

In 2023, the City and Metrolinx reviewed a list of previously identified partial land acquisitions with consideration to increasing the width of the pedestrian zone from 3.0m to 4.75m in accordance with the City's Complete Streets Design Manual.

City staff and Metrolinx collaboratively worked together to identify where pedestrian zone widths in line with the Complete Streets Design Manual could be achieved without undue impact on properties.

Historical Background

Metrolinx's 2019 LRT Project Specific Output Specifications, referenced in the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding, include a target value of a minimum 3.0m wide pedestrian zone, with certain exceptions in constrained areas of the corridor. The Complete Street Design Guidelines Manual, compiled by the City between the LRT project cancellation in 2019 and its reactivation in 2021, and approved in 2022, provides a different target width for the pedestrian zone in various road typologies, which is inclusive of a walkway, street/tree furniture, buffer and frontage zones.

In 2023, the City and Metrolinx reviewed a list of partial land acquisitions with consideration to increasing the width of the pedestrian zone, improving the public realm, and providing greening opportunities in accordance with updated streetscape design standards outlined in the City's Complete Street Design Guidelines Manual. For the purpose of this report, the pedestrian zone is the area in the Right of Way that accommodates pedestrians, streetscape and urban design elements.

Figure 1: Illustration of Pedestrian Zones per Complete Streets Design Manual (p.54)



The Table for Pedestrian Zone Dimensions, on page 55 of the Complete Street Design Guidelines Manual, identifies a minimum desired width of 4.75m (2m walkway, 1.75m street tree/furniture, 0.5m buffer and 0.5m frontage zones) as being appropriate for the LRT corridor and accommodation of high levels of pedestrian traffic and users of mobility devices.

City Assessment of Properties

An initial list of 163 non-municipal properties was identified by City and Metrolinx staff for the purpose of achieving a wider pedestrian zone.

Each of these properties was evaluated by City staff by taking into consideration contextual conditions for each property: their proximity to future LRT stops, crossing opportunities, schools and other community facilities; the ability of the site to support consistent and high quality streetscaping in the context of established lot and front yard patterns along the block; or their potential to contribute with a significant length of public realm at key locations in the short and near term. The site's potential to contribute to the public realm was further weighed with its likelihood of redeveloping (and achieving dedication of lands through private investment) in the short to near term and assessed from a cost/benefit perspective. As a result of balancing these criteria, each property was ranked as a High, Medium, or Low priority for the City.

Through collaborative discussion, Metrolinx agreed that costs associated with additional land acquisitions of 122 properties out of the initial list of 163 properties, are to be captured as Metrolinx project costs. The decision was based on Metrolinx's internal review to determine where acquisition of additional lands would align with other overall project goals (ie: constructability, space for subsurface utilities) while meeting the City's requirement of fulfilling the Complete Streets Design Manual desired minimums. Metrolinx's list of 122 properties included properties that the City identified as high-ranked properties for a wider pedestrian zone.

As these partial land acquisitions will become part of the City's road Right of Way, the City and Metrolinx are currently working toward developing the agreed upon conditions of acquiring these lands, which will be incorporated into Real Estate Protocols between the City and Metrolinx for the LRT project.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not applicable.