

## ECONOMIC IMPACT:

These factors will look at how routes and stations can serve businesses, as well as how much a rapid transit system will cost.

- 19 Ability to serve concentrations of employment** – Which stations will best serve existing and potential places of employment located within 600 metres, or about a 10-minute walk, by encouraging employees to take transit to work; which stations will give employers access to a more employees.
- 20 Ability to serve retailers** – Which stations will give people who use transit the best access to existing and potential stores and services; which stations will give the stores and services around stations the best access to customers who live or work nearby.
- 21 Cost** – The estimated capital cost to construct each possible route and station; what construction issues (the need for bridges, underground tunnels, etc.) could impact the cost; the estimated cost to operate and maintain each technology (BRT, LRT) and route.

Once all of this information has been gathered and analyzed, it will be presented to the community and stakeholders for input. This is expected to happen in fall 2007.

The routes, station locations and technologies in each segment that are ranked highest will be used to design a complete rapid transit system that will run from Waterloo to Cambridge. The Rapid Transit Environmental Assessment is expected to be completed in the spring of 2008.

### For more information:

[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/transitea](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/transitea)

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## Rapid Transit Environmental Assessment



[www.region.waterloo.on.ca/transitea](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/transitea)



# Connecting to the Future

## Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region



SUMMER 2007: Phase 2, Step 2

FACT SHEET

## Shaping the Future: Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region

**T**he Region of Waterloo is doing a study to find the best rapid transit system for Waterloo Region. The study, called an Environmental Assessment (EA), began in 2006 and is being overseen by the Province of Ontario's Ministry of the Environment. The Province announced in June 2007 that it would provide two-thirds of the project costs for the Region's rapid transit system.

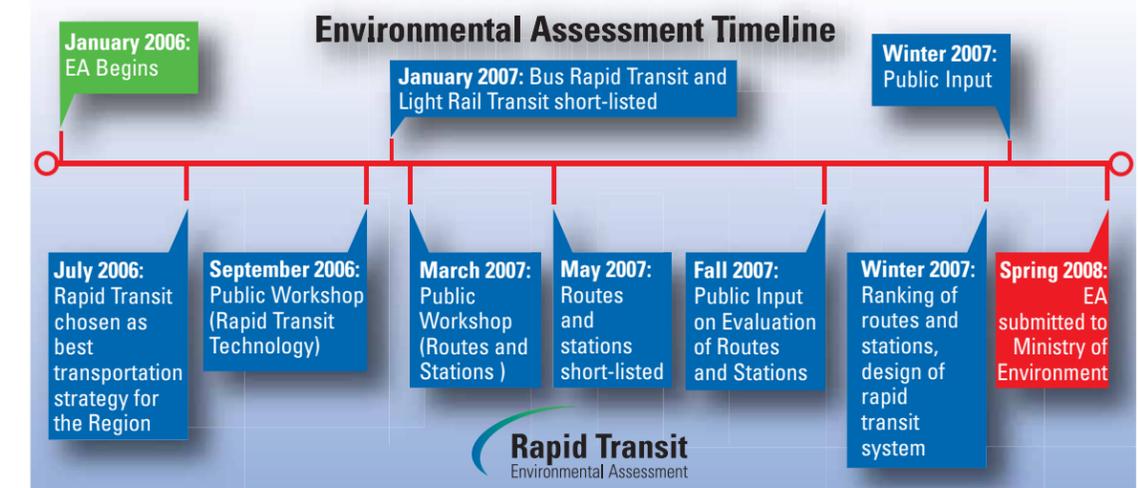
After hearing from the public in the first phase of the study, Regional Council decided that a rapid transit system running between Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo would be the best strategy to help manage growth and reduce car use as part of the implementation of the Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS). Along with an improved bus system, rapid transit will give residents an environmentally-friendly

way of getting around our growing community in the future.

The second phase of the Environmental Assessment is now underway. This timeline below shows both the progress made so far with the help of the public who have come to public consultation events, and the decisions the public will help us make in the future.

Right now, the Region's consultants are studying routes, stations and the two short-listed rapid transit technologies (Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit). During this evaluation, they are using 21 different factors that were approved by the Ministry of Environment.

This Fact Sheet will give you more information on the 21 factors and how each will be used to help us choose the best possible rapid transit system for Waterloo Region.



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## Evaluating routes and station locations

The purpose of this evaluation is to find out what benefits rapid transit will have for our economy, environment and community. The 21 factors that will be used to evaluate the rapid transit route and station locations are:

### TRANSPORTATION:

Factors in this area relate to the operation of a rapid transit system.

- 1 Ridership potential** – Which routes and stations will serve the most riders, including riders from the new homes and businesses that will be located close to rapid transit stations.
- 2 System reliability/speed** – The conditions along the different routes and around stations that could slow down a rapid transit vehicle like pedestrian crossings, intersections with or without stoplights, and busy roads with lots of traffic.
- 3 System performance** – How long will it take to travel each rapid transit route, and how conditions along a route and around stations might affect how fast rapid transit vehicles can travel.
- 4 Property requirements** – The amount and cost of any land the Region might need to purchase to build rapid transit routes or stations.
- 5 Travel time competitiveness with auto** – The amount of time it would take for rapid transit to travel each route compared to the same trip by car.



- 6 Roadway network demand** – How rapid transit will reduce traffic congestion near the rapid transit routes when traffic moves to other nearby streets.



### SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT:

These factors will be used to determine the route and station locations that will best help people get to the places they live and play like their homes, shopping, entertainment, recreation facilities, cultural and heritage sites, healthcare, government, banking, etc. These factors will also help determine which routes and stations will have the least impact on sensitive areas.

- 7 Ability to serve residential uses** – Which stations will best serve current and future homes in the region, including affordable housing, that are within 600 metres, or about a 10-minute walk, of a station.
- 8 Ability to serve institutional uses** – Which stations will best serve current and future institutions like schools, universities, hospitals, etc. within 600 metres of each station, and the number of people who may be using these institutions now and in the future.
- 9 Vibration** – The number of sensitive buildings, like historic buildings, that are close to a route.
- 10 Noise** – The length of each route that passes noise-sensitive areas like residential developments, hospitals, nursing/retirement homes, schools and day-care centres, and the level of future traffic noise on roads near a rapid transit route.



- 11 Contribution to cultural environment** – Which rapid transit stations will best serve current and future cultural attractions like museums, libraries, heritage districts and buildings, and arts and community centres that are within 600 metres, or about a 10-minute walk, of rapid transit stations.
- 12 Contribution to recreational environment** – Which rapid transit stations will best serve current and future recreational sites like parks, natural areas, sports arenas, ball fields, and sports facilities that are located within 600 metres, or about a 10-minute walk, of rapid transit stations.
- 13 Contribution to public health** – How many transit trips will include cycling and walking to and from transit stops, which promotes an active and healthier lifestyle; how air quality will be improved if people switch from cars to transit.
- 14 Contribution to built heritage** – Which rapid transit stations will best serve the region's heritage sites within 600 metres, or about a 10-minute walk, of each station; how these sites will be further protected by reducing car travel and road widenings.

### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:

These factors will be used to determine the route and station locations that can best help us to protect the environment.

- 15 Ecological impact** – The number of sensitive, natural areas along each route or close to stations like wetlands, floodplains, environmentally sensitive landscapes or agricultural lands that could be affected by construction or a potential increase in noise, light and vibration.
- 16 Water quality** – The length of each route that would require salting or other deicing in the winter, because road salt has an impact on the Region's groundwater supply.
- 17 Air quality** – The length of each route that pass by sensitive areas such as residences, hospitals, nursing/retirement homes, schools and day-care centres that could be affected by emissions from traffic and rapid transit vehicles; the potential benefits to air quality when people leave their cars at home and take rapid transit.
- 18 Mineral Aggregate Resources** – How much mineral aggregates (gravel pits and quarries) may be needed to construct rapid transit routes. The EA must measure how the rapid transit system might impact natural resources like mineral aggregate; how much aggregate resources are located along potential routes that could possibly be disturbed by the construction of a rapid transit route.

