



REGION OF WATERLOO

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
Rapid Transit

TO: Chair Jim Wideman and Members of the Planning and Works Committee

DATE: April 9, 2013 **FILE CODE:** A02-30/PW

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDED LOCATION AND ACCESS MODIFICATIONS FOR GRAND RIVER HOSPITAL RAPID TRANSIT STOP

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the recommended location and access modifications for the Grand River Hospital Rapid Transit station stop, as per Report E-13-050, dated April 9, 2013.

REPORT:

The Region of Waterloo's Rapid Transit Project (RT) is moving forward, with construction starting in 2014 and service beginning in 2017. As part of the early functional design, an RT stop was identified on King Street at Pine Street, across from Grand River Hospital (GRH) to serve the hospital and surrounding residential, commercial, and institutional areas.

Regional staff have been working with GRH, Emergency Services and the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo to develop a design that will maintain key access points to the hospital, maintain traffic circulation, and provide safe and efficient RT service in the area. The evaluation was based on the following general considerations:

- Access to GRH emergency entrance and internal circulation
- Rapid Transit operations and safety
- Non-vehicular traffic operations and safety
- Neighbourhood access and traffic circulation
- Property acquisition, construction cost and staging impacts

A number of variations of station stop locations for traffic signal locations and GRH access points were developed, considered and evaluated. Based on those reviews by Region, GRH and City of Waterloo and Kitchener staff, the following access modifications on King Street between Union and Green Streets are recommended:

- Shift the RT station stop from Pine Street to a new intersection at the existing main entrance to the hospital;
- A new traffic signal to be added at the existing main entrance to the hospital to maintain left turn access and the existing fire route;
- A new traffic signal to be added at Mount Hope Street to accommodate the proposed relocation of the hospital's emergency entrance via Mount Hope Street;
- The existing traffic signal at Pine Street to be removed, with the intersection becoming right-in and right-out only. Existing left turn movements at Pine Street will be accommodated via U-turns at Green Street and Mount Hope Street.

This design will result in minimal neighbourhood cut-through traffic and out of direction travel. Attachment A illustrates the access modifications being recommended.

Public Consultation

A Public Information Centre (PIC) to present these modifications was held on March 20, 2013.

Location: Knox Presbyterian Church
 Address: 50 Erb Street West, Waterloo
 Time: 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

In advance of the PIC, letters were sent to residents and business owners in the adjacent neighbourhoods in the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo. The letters, which were mailed out on March 6, 2013, invited them to participate in the PIC. Staff also hand delivered letters to the businesses and tenants along Pine Street.

Newspaper advertisements promoting the PIC were included in the Waterloo Chronicle (March 13, 2013), Waterloo Region Record (March 15, 2013), and the Kitchener Post (March 15, 2013). Road signs advertising the PIC were posted from March 13-20, 2013.

Results

The PIC was well attended. In total, 40 residents and business owners from the study area participated in the PIC, with 29 completing comment forms. A summary of the comments received is as follows:

- Support the modifications – 22 responses (76%)
- Against the modifications – 3 responses (10%)
- Suggested concerns with the modifications – 4 responses (14%)

Summary of written comments received from the public are provided in Attachment B

The following is a brief summary of the concerns raised by the participants and the recommended mitigation measures:

- **Traffic infiltration on to Herbert and Mary Streets:** proposed changes to the Pine Street intersection at King Street including the elimination of left turns will be mitigated by the availability of U-turns at Green Street and Mount Hope Street intersections. Any potential diversion of traffic to adjacent local residential streets is expected to be minimal.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycle access;** proposed modifications will provide crosswalks at the signalized Mount Hope Street, Grand River Hospital driveway and Green Street intersections. These crosswalks will enable pedestrians and bicyclists to cross King Street and to access the hospital and the RT stop in a safe and efficient manner.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

The report supports Focus Area 3.1 of Council's Strategic Focus: Develop an implementation plan for light rail transit including corridor and station area planning.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The design and construction of the location and access modification for the GRH rapid transit stop and its associated costs is included in the RT budget and contract.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

Finance was consulted during the preparation of this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – GRH Rapid Transit Stop Location and Access Modifications

Attachment B – Summary of written comments submitted during PIC

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APPROVED BY: *Thomas Schmidt*, Commissioner, Transportation and Environmental Services

GRH Rapid Transit Stop Location and Access Modifications

New signalized intersection at Mt. Hope St. & King St.

New signalized intersection at the main entrance to Grand River Hospital & King St.



- New Signal
- Removed Signal
- No Change

Existing signal removed from the Pine St. intersection and changed to right-in/right-out only (i.e. no left turns)

No changes at the Green St. intersection

Attachment B

Record	City	Comments
1	Kitchener	I live on Mary St. & I do not believe that there will be minimal cut thru traffic. It is very difficult now to turn left off Marry onto Union in the morning & the plan will make it even more difficult.
2	Kitchener	Generally support the change. I would like the region to focus on improving cyclists' ability to cross the RT line legally & without dismounting. Pine St & other intersections that are important to cyclists (because they are secondary roads or connect to trails) are being cut off. U-turns & left turns from king will be challenging-consider bike boxes & other measures. Would like to see marked pedestrian access at pine St. to the end of platform, (North side), may reduce jaywalking.
3	Not Provided	Concerned about traffic on Mary St/Herbert access to Union difficult - Union traffic heavy makes left turn hazardous. Consider a signal at Mary & Union?
4	Waterloo	My concern includes the addition of more street lights and no roundabouts (more roundabouts are preferred!!!). As well, the large addition to the Sorbrara Law firm which has access to Herbert is an immediate concern contributing more congestion. Additionally, the removal of the left turn lane on pine will contribute to greater wait times when turning left onto Union from Marry, Herbert, Bowman, Lucan etc.
5	Kitchener	I like the change. I live on Mary St and we get a lot of cars using Mary a short cut to King St (from Union to Pine). This will reduce the traffic on Marry St. The legal U-turns will be a learning curve (roundabouts come to mind!)
6	Kitchener	Should consider continuing pedestrian crossing at Pine - human behaviour being what it is, you're not going to stop pedestrians who find crossing there more convenient-best to make sure that happens safely rather than potentially penalizing them for doing what we expect them to.
16	Not Provided	Regional staff said that it is unlikely that there will be a similar design & Public Input for Allen-King (New LRT Stop location) - THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.
7	Kitchener	Mainly concerned about traffic implications for Mary Street
8	Kitchener	I live on Mary Street and take Pine to King & for turn left --> will no longer be able to do this. I understand why this is the case --> Will not be a problem.
9	Waterloo	Solution is workable - Actually very little direct impact on of Waterloo traffic. Egress & Access to main entrance is improved with signal

Record	City	Comments
10	Waterloo	Missing details about traffic study conducted --> would like more detailed information on the methodology. Concerns over adding additional traffic signals to King --> slowing traffic flow. Concerned about additional traffic being added to Herbert St --> was additional traffic from Sorbara Law considered (once finalized)? I doubt people will do a U-turn when there are thru-way options available. Concerned about safety issues for cycling on roads with train tracks --> bike turns get caught in tracks (did we consider a monorail/skytrain type of system to not have big impacts to traffic?). Concerned about additional wait times when trying to turn left from Herbert to Union.
11	Waterloo	No, more informations about traffic flow on Park St, Allen St, Caroline. Traffic from sunlife could cause problems. Should have had more boards for surrounding areas. The region has just created a Traffic nightmare
12	Not Provided	Having driver for the cancer society for three years I am familiar with the area. At the detail design stage I hope the 'new' south to west turn at Green will allow for the large buses used to move hospital employees to and from their parking lot on Park St. Moving the lights to the driveway is long overdue.
13	Not Provided	reasonable compromise/solution
14	Waterloo	it seems to be a good solution. I don't live in the affected area, but I use the bus daily. I'm just interested to know, what's coming up in the near future and how the whole thing is unfolding.
15	Not Provided	I'm sure the people using the Pine St. But won't be impressed by the changes & The U-turns might be questionable.