



REGION OF WATERLOO

PLANNING, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
Community Planning

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

DATE: June 18, 2013

FILE CODE: D10-70

SUBJECT: REGIONAL TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE STRATEGY FOR THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE – PROPOSED 2013 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT The Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the 2013 Implementation Plan, as described in Report No. 070, dated May 28, 2013, regarding the Transit Supportive Strategy to enhance transit ridership in the City of Cambridge.

SUMMARY:

As part of its multi-phased plan to implement rapid transit in Waterloo Region, Regional Council approved the allocation of \$1,000,000 annually for a 10-year period to implement transit-supportive strategies to enhance transit ridership and encourage transit-supportive development in the Central Transit Corridor in Cambridge (see Report E-11-072). The Transit Supportive Strategy is a series of initiatives that are identified and undertaken by either the Region or the City of Cambridge during the ten-year term of the Strategy. Regional and City staffs prepare a proposed implementation plan to be considered by Regional Council, including budgetary estimates for each of the proposed initiatives.

The proposed 2013 Implementation Plan includes initiatives carried over from the 2012 Implementation Plan, such as improvements to the Ainslie Street Terminal, the installation of 30 transit shelters (10 shelters per year for three years), and the funding of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) professional to help implement the strategy in the City of Cambridge. In addition to continuing these initiatives, three additional actions have been identified for planning and funding in 2013. These actions include:

- Installing sidewalks in the Lovell Industrial Park to connect transit stops to major employers;
- Establishing expanded Grand River Transit service connecting the Hespeler area of Cambridge to the Sports World and Cambridge Centre aBRT stations, and beginning to serve the “East Side” lands;
- Providing an additional 15 percent discount on transit passes for Conestoga College students to build Grand River Transit ridership.

This strategy has been collaboratively developed by staff of the City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo. Future initiatives have been discussed that include specific policy measures to increase transit-oriented development within key intensification areas, such as the Hespeler Road corridor. Regional and City staff will continue to develop the Strategy and recommend specific initiatives annually.

REPORT:

On June 15, 2011 Regional Council approved Light Rail Transit (LRT) as the preferred technology for the Region of Waterloo’s Rapid Transit system connecting Waterloo, Kitchener and Cambridge (see

Report No. E-11-072). The Region's ultimate goal is to implement a full LRT system along the Central Transit Corridor, but a staged implementation was endorsed by Regional Council to reflect differences in transit ridership, development potential, and capital and operating costs along the route and their impact on the tax base. The first stage is the implementation of LRT north of Fairview Park Mall in Kitchener and adapted Bus Rapid Transit (aBRT) south of Fairview Park Mall to the Ainslie Street Terminal in downtown Cambridge (Galt). The second stage is the completion of the LRT system from Fairview Park Mall to the Ainslie Street Terminal.

As part of its multi-phased plan to implement rapid transit in Waterloo Region, Regional Council approved the allocation of \$1,000,000 annually for a 10-year period to implement transit-supportive strategies to enhance transit ridership and encourage transit-supportive development in the Central Transit Corridor in Cambridge (see Report E-11-072). In response to this direction, City of Cambridge and Region of Waterloo staff collectively developed the 2012 Implementation Plan that was presented to the Planning and Works committee on February 28, 2012, and subsequently approved by Regional Council (see Report P-12-023/E-12-028).

2013 Implementation Plan – Carryover Initiatives

On February 28, 2012, the 2012 Implementation Plan was presented to the Planning and Works Committee for consideration and subsequently approved by Regional Council (see Report P-12-023/E-12-028). The report initiated five actions for Year 1 of the Transit Supportive Strategy. The progress of each initiative is summarized below.

1. City of Cambridge Core Areas Parking Master Plan

The Core Areas Parking Master Plan (Master Plan) was identified as a short-term transit supportive initiative in 2012 and Regional Council approved \$760,000 to provide the major capital installations associated with the Master Plan.

In March 2009, City of Cambridge Council approved the Master Plan (see Cambridge Report TPW-17/09). A key objective of the Master Plan was to assess existing and future parking needs and to develop a forward-looking and sustainable parking framework. The Master Plan was developed through extensive consultation with various stakeholders and technical agencies. Further, the process involved close collaboration between the City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo, which resulted in a Master Plan that addressed several joint interests.

On September 24, 2012, City of Cambridge Council directed staff to proceed with the Master Plan's Communication Plan as approved in March 2009. Throughout the Communication Plan process, the public expressed overwhelming opposition to the implementation of the Master Plan. Residents were concerned by the time lapse between the approval and implementation of the Master Plan and the persistent economic challenges faced by the City during that time. Local businesses and residents suggested several changes to the approved plan, especially related to on-street parking and transit service.

On November 12, 2012, the City of Cambridge cancelled the implementation of the Master Plan and directed staff to work with the Region of Waterloo to identify other appropriate initiatives for Transit Supportive Strategy funding.

2. Funding to expand the TravelWise Transportation Management Association and associated Transportation Demand Management (TDM) services to the L.G. Lovell Industrial Park

Identifying the reasons why people do (or do not) ride transit in a particular area is an important first step in designing a successful Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program. To start the conversation at the Lovell Industrial Park, the Region conducted an in-depth survey at a sample group

of businesses to specifically ask employees why they do or do not ride transit. A total of 441 responses were received from an estimated employee sample of 3,730; a 12 percent response rate. The margin of error for this survey is +/-4 percent. The key findings of the survey as they relate to the Transit Supportive Strategy are listed below.

- Respondents specifically requested more sidewalks in the Lovell Industrial Park.
- Six percent of respondents take transit to work, while 80 percent drive alone and 10 percent carpool.
- Current transit riders are satisfied with GRT service.
- Several managers are receptive to providing TDM programming at their worksite as stated by survey respondents.
- The programs that are most likely to increase sustainable transportation rates include, but are not limited to: reduced cost transit passes; personalized transit information; and assistance finding a carpool partner. These programs are provided by the Region at participating TravelWise employers in other areas.

While the development of the program is ongoing, some examples of proposed transit-supportive initiatives directly tied to the survey include:

- The expansion of the TravelWise TMA (TravelWise@Work) to the Lovell Industrial Park to provide reduced-fare corporate transit passes, personalized transit information, and assistance finding a carpool partner; and
- Pedestrian improvements such as sidewalks and bus shelters to make transit a more comfortable and attractive option.

Focus groups are planned with employees from the Lovell Industrial Park to explore potential future initiatives that could be used to address barriers to transit use. The focus groups will be held with users of sustainable transportation as well as employees who currently drive alone to work. Results of the TDM initiatives will be monitored and analysed for their applicability to other areas within the Region, especially along the Central Transit Corridor.

3. Funding for Strategic Pedestrian and Transit Infrastructure Investments in the City of Cambridge

i. The Ainslie Street Terminal Pedestrian Environment

Constructed in the 1990s, the Ainslie Street Terminal is one of GRT's busiest stations in Cambridge with approximately 4,000 passenger boardings per day. There are many existing challenges at the terminal including its large paved surface. Also, most of the waiting areas do not have transit shelters. Given its importance to Grand River Transit, as well as to the future rapid transit system, this project is intended to identify and design improvements to better integrate it with downtown Cambridge. Improvements could include on-site wayfinding signage, more transit shelters, benches, landscaping, public art and bicycle parking, as well as better pedestrian and cyclist connections to the surrounding street network.

The Terms of Reference seeks a qualified consulting team to help identify strategic improvements for the Ainslie Street Terminal with the ultimate goal of increasing transit ridership and creating a more comfortable place for people. A key objective of this study is to identify changes that will improve the integration of transit in downtown Cambridge and connections between GRT and aBRT, and ultimately LRT.

ii. Transit Shelters for the City of Cambridge

Grand River Transit has seen substantial increases in service levels and ridership since it assumed the operations of the regional transit system in 2000; however, in some locations there are still too few riders to warrant transit shelters. As part of the Transit Supportive Strategy, Council approved the installation of 30 additional shelters along various routes in Cambridge to respond to resident requests and to support ridership in the Central Transit Corridor. It was recommended that the implementation these shelters be phased in over a three year period, with 10 shelters constructed per year at a cost of \$130,000 in 2012, \$133,000 in 2013 and \$136,000 in year 2014.

In spring 2012, the decision was made to delay installation of the Transit Supportive Strategy bus shelter pads until 2013 because the price quotes received for the new pads were considerably higher than quotes received in previous years. By waiting to include both the 2012 and 2013 pads in Design and Construction's 2013 contract tender, GRT will be able to secure a much better price than was available in 2012.

Twenty shelters are scheduled for installation in 2013, including 6 shelters in the Lovell Industrial Park and the Cambridge Business Park.

4. Funding for a Transportation Demand Management Coordinator/Station Area Planner in the City of Cambridge

The proposed funding will pay for a dedicated staff person at the City of Cambridge to help implement the Transit Supportive Strategy. The 2012 Implementation Plan included the pro-rated cost of hiring a TDM professional to work with City and Regional staff to further develop, implement, monitor and report on the Transit Supportive Strategy, and to support station area planning at the City of Cambridge. The preliminary 2013 budget assumed that the costs of the new TDM planner position would be supplemented by revenues generated by the Core Areas Parking Master Plan, which is no longer being pursued by the City of Cambridge. Therefore, staff recommends reallocating funds from year 1 to pay for a 3-year TDM coordinator contract for the City. The total three year cost of this position is \$270,000 including wages and benefits.

Proposed 2013 Implementation Plan

In Report P-12-023/E-12-028, Regional Council authorized unspent funds from the Transit Supportive Strategy to be carried over in a capital fund for future initiatives identified and recommended by the City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo. A two-step evaluation process was developed in 2012 to assist with the consideration of potential initiatives. This evaluation process continues to guide the selection of appropriate initiatives for the Strategy. To increase transit ridership in target market segments, the Transit Supportive Strategy also allows for transit related improvements to be funded for up to three years when no other, more appropriate, budget source exists. The proposed 2013 Implementation Plan recommends the continuation of the 2012 initiatives and identifies three additional transit and active transportation related projects that require planning and/or funding starting in 2013. These projects include the following.

1. Sidewalk Installation

The road corridors in the Lovell Industrial Park are designed to accommodate large volumes of truck traffic. Sidewalks have not been a high priority because of the expense of serving large employment blocks, which are typically low generators of pedestrian activity. However, when asked in a recent survey, employees at every major employer in the Lovell Industrial Park consistently rated sidewalks as the highest priority infrastructure for the area. Survey respondents also identified sidewalks as being important for transit ridership and for improving their sense of safety in the industrial park.

Using GRT ridership data, as well as information gathered through the survey, approximately 950 metres of high priority sidewalks were identified in 7 locations within the Lovell Industrial Park. These sidewalk sections would connect existing transit stops to major employers or to adjacent sidewalk segments. As part of the Transit Supportive Strategy, staff recommend installing these sidewalks on both City and Regional roads at an estimated total cost of \$260,000. The cost of the sidewalk installation includes 8 transit pads, which are not included in the shelter implementation plan approved in 2012.

2. Transit Service Improvements

To generate additional ridership in the Central Transit Corridor and to improve connections to aBRT stations, staff recommends a new route (Route 112) from Cambridge Centre to Sportsworld Drive, via the Hespeler core and Maple Grove Road (Attachment 4: Proposed Transit Service Improvements for 2014). Route 112 would replace the section of Route 53 north of Bishop Street and serve the Cambridge Business Park, Lovell Industrial Park, the new Boxwood Industrial Park, nearby lands that are planned for new employment opportunities (the East Side lands), as well as several residential, institutional and commercial districts in Cambridge. The route would also continue west of Sportsworld Drive to connect to the Conestoga College campus. Direct connections would also be made from Hespeler to the new aBRT stations at Sportsworld Drive and Cambridge Centre. Route 53 would continue to operate from Cambridge Centre to Ainslie Street Terminal via Franklin Boulevard, allowing direct connections to aBRT at both locations.

The proposed Route 112 is similar to the Mid-Region iXpress proposed for 2017 in the GRT Business Plan. The accelerated service along Maple Grove Road, if funded by the Transit Supportive Strategy, will help build ridership for the planned iXpress service by supporting sustainable commuting patterns as the area grows, rather than trying to influence them after they are established in 2017. Additional advantages to Route 112 include:

- Direct access to Cambridge Centre from the Franklin Street corridor;
- Direct access to the Eastern Industrial Park from Cambridge Centre aBRT station;
- Direct trip to St. Benedict High School for students in Hespeler;
- Reduced travel times for Hespeler residents connecting to Kitchener;
- A by-product of the new route is a faster transit option to Conestoga College for the 250 students currently living there;
- Additional transit service to the South Cambridge Shopping Centre; and
- Proactive provision of GRT service for the forthcoming East Side employment lands.

Optimizing Route 53 and adding Route 112 will cost approximately \$484,400 annually for three years, starting in 2014. The Route 112 expansion requires three new buses to provide 30-minute headways during the peak commuter travel periods. The cost of this service will be absorbed in 2017 by the Regional Transportation Master Plan Reserve Fund when the Mid-Region iXpress is introduced.

3. Conestoga College Transit Pass Discount

In concurrence with the City of Cambridge, Regional staff recommends offering Conestoga College students a further 15 percent discount on their transit passes. As of July 1, 2013, the cost of a four month College Pass will be \$240 compared to \$288 for four adult monthly passes (the closest comparable rate). The proposed discount would reduce the price of the College Pass to \$204 for four months. The estimated cost to the Transit Supportive Strategy for the 2013-2014 school year is \$152,000 and staff recommends funding this initiative for three years. A contingency of approximately \$25,000 is included to help GRT respond to increased demand with additional service on routes 61, 111 and 112, if warranted.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The foundation of the Transit Supportive Strategy and the text of the MOU were finalized with the City of Cambridge in 2012. However, changes to the MOU may be required to reflect the deferral of the Core Areas Parking Master Plan and to incorporate additional initiatives in 2013.

Potential Future Initiatives (Not recommended as part of this report)

Addressing the challenges of lower-density and non-transit-supportive land uses has been identified as an important objective of the Transit Supportive Strategy. To build ridership potential and to realize opportunities for intensification and redevelopment along Hespeler Road, these potential future initiatives include specific policy measures to increase transit-oriented development. Regional and City staff continue to develop the strategy and will recommend specific initiatives annually for implementation as appropriate.

Examples of potential initiatives include:

- Improvements to the Cambridge Centre Transit Terminal;
- Groff Mill Creek Watershed Study to support the reurbanization of Hespeler Road;
- Exploring the possibility of a shared parking structure or Park and Ride facility in Galt, near the Ainslie Street Terminal;
- Utilizing the tools/programs provided for in the Region's Reurbanization Community Improvement Plan;
- Station Area Plans; and
- Transit-Oriented Development policy development, financial incentives, and/or Guidelines.

The two-step evaluation process that was developed for the 2012 Implementation Plan and guided the 2013 Implementation Plan will also be used to select initiatives in future years of the Transit Supportive Strategy. For more information on the evaluation process, please see Attachment 3.

Next Steps

If approved, Region and City staff will move to implement the action items identified in this report and summarized in Attachment 2, the Proposed 2013 Transit Supportive Strategy for Cambridge Implementation Plan Summary.

As identified in Report P-12-023/E-12-028, staff will continue to work with the City of Cambridge to identify and recommend transit-supportive initiatives for consideration by Regional Council. Staff will also continue to include progress reports highlighting key evaluation metrics so that the incremental improvements related to this strategy can be measured.

Area Municipal Consultation/Coordination

This strategy has been collaboratively developed by staff of the City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo. Given the various interests involved and the multi-disciplinary nature of the exercise, several different departments at both the City and Region have been involved as required. Representation from the City of Cambridge has included senior staff from Planning Services as well as from Transportation and Public Works.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Cambridge Transit Supportive Strategy is consistent with Focus Area 2: Growth Management and Prosperity: Manage growth to foster thriving and productive urban and rural communities. It is

also consistent with Focus Area 3: Sustainable Transportation: Develop greater, more sustainable and safe transportation choices.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Cambridge Transit Supportive Strategy was identified as part of the Preferred Rapid Transit System Implementation Option and Staging Plan approved June 15, 2011, including an allocation of \$1,000,000 annually, for an initial 10-year period, subject to budget approval (see Report E-11-072).

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

Staff from Planning, Housing and Community Services, Transportation and Environmental Services, Corporate Resources (Legal) and Finance, Grand River Transit and the Rapid Transit Project Team continue to be involved with the development, implementation and monitoring of the Cambridge Transit Supportive Strategy.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1 – 2012 Transit Supportive Strategy for Cambridge Implementation Plan Summary
- Attachment 2 – Proposed 2013 Transit Supportive Strategy for Cambridge Implementation Plan Summary
- Attachment 3 – Transit Supportive Strategy Screening Process
- Attachment 4 – Proposed Transit Service Improvements for 2014

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APPROVED BY: Rob Horne, Commissioner of Planning, Housing and Community Services

Approved 2012 Transit Supportive Strategy for Cambridge Attachment 1

Implementation Plan Summary

The following tables provide a summary of how the \$1,000,000 annual budget for the Cambridge Transit Supportive Strategy was approved to be allocated in 2012.

2012 Strategy Budget Allocation (Approved by Regional and City Staff)		
Initiative	Focus	Estimated Budget *
Cambridge Core Area Parking Master Plan	One Time Expenditures (i.e. Off-street pay-and-display equipment and bicycle parking)	\$760,000
TravelWise Program	Employer/Employee Surveys L.G Lovell Industrial Park	\$5,000
Pedestrian and Transit Infrastructure Investments	Ainslie Street Terminal Improvements - Study	\$35,000
	Transit Shelters (10)	\$130,000
TDM Coordinator/Station Area Planner	Strategy Implementation – Parking Master Plan and TDM	\$70,000*
Other Associated Costs (to be agreed upon by the Region of Waterloo and the City of Cambridge)	To Be Determined	Dependant on savings
Total		\$1,000,000

*Specific allocations may vary slightly in order to provide for the implementation of complementary programs, cost efficiencies or other variables that may be identified in collaboration with Area Municipal and Regional staff.

**Funding for initial length of 12-month commitment – assuming contract begins April 1, 2012. The allocation between 2012 and 2013 will depend on the commencement date of the contract. Any additional funds available in 2012 due to a later contract commencement will be reallocated to the Pedestrian and Transit Infrastructure Improvements.

Proposed 2013 Transit Supportive Strategy for Cambridge
Attachment 2
 Implementation Plan Summary

The following table provides a summary of how the \$1,000,000 annual budget for the Cambridge Transit Supportive Strategy is recommended to be allocated in 2013 and 2014 by Regional and City of Cambridge staff.

Year	CTSS Annual Budget	Initiative	Focus	Project Budget	CTSS Budget Carryover
2012	\$1,000,000	Cambridge Core Area Parking Master Plan	One Time Expenditures (i.e. Off-street pay-and-display equipment and bicycle parking)	\$760,000 (cancelled)	
		TravelWise Program	Lovell Industrial Park TDM Survey	\$28,000 (scope increased)	
		Pedestrian and Transit Infrastructure Investments	Ainslie Street Terminal Improvements - Study	\$35,000 (carry forward)	
			Transit Shelters	\$130,000 (carry forward)	
		TDM Coordinator/ Station Area Planner	CTSS Strategy Implementation	\$70,000 (carry forward)	
		Other Associated Costs	TBD	TBD	
			Actual	\$28,000	
Proposed 2013	\$1,972,000	TravelWise Program	Conestoga College Transit Pass subsidy	\$152,000	
		Pedestrian and Transit Infrastructure Investments	Ainslie Street Terminal Improvements - Study (carry over)	\$50,000	
			Sidewalk installation L.G. Lovell Industrial Area based on survey results	\$260,000	
			Transit Shelters (carry over and previously approved)	\$263,000	
		TDM Coordinator/ Station Area Planner	CTSS Strategy Implementation (first 6 months of 3-year contract)	\$45,000	
	Sub-Total	\$770,000	\$1,202,000		

Proposed 2014	\$2,202,000	TravelWise Program	Conestoga College Transit Pass subsidy	\$163,000	
		Pedestrian and Transit Infrastructure Investments	Transit Shelters	\$36,000	
			Transit Route enhancements	\$484,000	
			Ainslie Street Terminal Improvements	\$227,000	
		Planning Studies	Groff Mill Creek Plan	\$70,000	
		TDM Coordinator/ Station Area Planner	CTSS Strategy Implementation	\$90,000	
			Sub-Total	\$1,170,000	

Transit Supportive Strategy Screening Process (2012)

Attachment 3

Strategic Themes

1. **Research/ Marketing Initiatives** - Examples of this include detailed surveys/research with employers, workers and students to increase data on current transit usage and demand. Further, this information could lead to targeted education and TDM individualized marketing campaigns to help overcome barriers to transit usage.
2. **Physical Infrastructure Improvements** - Examples include improvements to pedestrian amenities that could be made relatively quickly and have a tangible benefit in the short term. It could also include funding to help the City implement various transit supportive initiatives such as the Core Areas Parking Master Plan
3. **Transit Related Improvements** - Free transit passes, subsidies or other improvements, modifications or acceleration of transit service provision *may be* considered as part of this strategy in order to accelerate ridership increases in target market segments.
4. **Studies** - Studies related to transportation, land use, infrastructure requirements as well as environmental conditions will all be required in order to realize the reurbanization potential along the rapid transit corridor.

A list of potential initiatives that fit the strategic themes of the Transit Supportive Strategy is identified by Regional and City staff for further discussion and evaluation.

2 Step Evaluation Process

Step 1: Pass/Fail Screening

The screening criteria listed will be applied to each of the potential action items. Any action item that fails on one or more of these criteria will be screened out from further consideration as part of this strategy. The yes/no response in the last column, indicates the response that will receive a “Pass”.

Screening Criteria	Pass/Fail Question	Response
Strategic Alignment	Is this action item consistent with the goal of the Cambridge Transit Supportive Strategy to expedite the development of LRT in the City of Cambridge by enhancing transit ridership and/or encouraging transit supportive development, specifically within the Central Transit Corridor?	Yes = Pass
Budgetary Considerations	Can this action item be funded <i>in the short-term (1 to 2 years)</i> through another, more appropriate, budgetary source?	No = Pass
Rapid Transit Infrastructure	Is this action item part of the infrastructure improvements required as part of the rapid transit project (ie. design, utility/ infrastructure relocations, or construction of the physical RT corridor/stations)?	No = Pass

Step 2: Ranking of Potential Action Items

The purpose of the following criteria is to provide a basis to rank different action items proposed. The purpose of this evaluation is not to eliminate action items, but rather to determine the relative rankings of each option (and priority). Action Items will be ranked “High, Medium and Low”. The factor and criteria proposed are as follows:

Criteria Group	Criteria	Description
<i>Transportation</i>	Ridership Potential	Has the potential to support improved ridership along the rapid transit corridor and feeder routes in Cambridge.
	Connectivity	Improves the connectivity of the rapid transit corridor with the overall transportation system (including active forms of transportation).
<i>Land Use</i>	Supports Reurbanization	Supports reurbanization adjacent to the rapid transit corridor and/or within in the broader station areas (including residential and institutional uses).
	Supports Employment	Has the potential to generate employment along the rapid transit corridor and/or within in the broader station areas.
<i>Implementation</i>	Feasible	Can be feasibly implemented within the context of existing City/Regional work plans and available staff resources (if additional support is required).
	Reproducible	Has the potential to serve as a pilot (with lessons learned) for future application elsewhere along the RT corridor.

Attachment 4 - Proposed Transit Service Improvements for 2014

PROPOSED CTSS TRANSIT SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

