

## Briefing Note: Council Workshop on Mobility Hubs

June 2014

### 1. Workshop Purpose

- Present and discuss findings and recommendations from the *Mobility Hubs Opportunities and Constraints Study* (May 2014)
- Facilitate a collective discussion with Council
- Obtain feedback from Council to inform the Official Plan Review
- Provide discussion on potential policy directions for Mobility Hubs
- Provide discussion on the next phase of mobility hub planning work

### 2. Planning Context

- The *Planning Act*, the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan, and the Big Move all inform the planning of Mobility Hubs.
- Mobility Hubs support a number of objectives in Council's Strategic Plan. Mobility Hubs have the potential to contribute to the development of vibrant neighbourhoods where opportunities to live, work, learn and play are accessible by walking, cycling, and transit. They have the potential to become special mixed use intensification areas which may support more people both living and working in the City of Burlington.
- Fundamental objectives of mobility hub planning:
  - ✓ Coordinate land use, transportation and transit infrastructure to ensure that projected density and movement of goods and people can be effectively and efficiently achieved.
  - ✓ Develop a strong local vision for the mobility hubs to ensure that each hub is a unique destination within the city, contributing to the City's identity.
  - ✓ Coordinate Mobility Hubs as a component of the broader city and regional transportation system to ensure seamless movement of people and goods.

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- ✓ Invest in a high quality public realm to recognize that urban design and amenity space are important elements of these unique destinations.
- ✓ Recognize that the vision for Mobility Hubs should include their functional role (e.g. to support a mix of land uses including employment, to enhance the important transportation role) as well their potential to become attractive and beautiful community spaces.
- ✓ Create pedestrian and transit-oriented places at the mobility hubs with connections to the broader city-wide trails and pedestrian network.
- ✓ Address issues of land use compatibility by mitigating potential adverse impacts of rail and employment uses on sensitive uses and inversely, protecting employment uses from the intrusion of sensitive land uses which could limit their viability.
- ✓ Recognize the importance of major infrastructure to accommodate potential growth.
- ✓ Create a policy framework that supports these special mixed use areas.
- ✓ Capture the mobility hubs' potential to become important intensification nodes that accommodate growth and the balance of jobs and people in the city.
- ✓ Leverage the mobility hubs' potential to contribute to the city's competitive positioning in a regional and global market.

### 3. Potential Policy Directions

Below staff have developed potential policy directions based on the recommendations and findings of the *Mobility Hubs Opportunities and Constraints Study* ("MHOC Study") as part of the Official Plan Review and feedback received from agency and public engagement to date. Staff will consider Council's comments in refining and recommending proposed policy directions for approval by Council.

#### A. Incorporate Mobility Hubs into the Official Plan

**Issue:** The MHOC Study considered the City of Burlington's two provincially-designated mobility hubs (the Burlington GO station area and the Urban Growth Centre) and two City-identified mobility hubs (Aldershot and Appleby GO station areas). These mobility hubs have the potential to be areas of significant change over the coming years as they transition to special mixed use intensification areas that can accommodate population growth by including a clear vision and supporting policy directions for each with the Official Plan. By developing a policy framework for Mobility Hubs, the City will have the opportunity to guide population and employment growth over the next 20 years in these regeneration areas while achieving other city-building objectives.

#### **Status:**

- As part of conformity with the Growth Plan, OPA 59 was the first time the City considered land use and intensification around the three GO stations. OPA 59 introduced the concept and identified the three GO stations and the areas around them as "Major Transit Station Areas" that form part of the [City's intensification strategy](#). The Official Plan's policies for these Major Transit Station Areas should be updated to include Mobility Hubs.
- While there are existing policies in the Official Plan for transit-supportive development and land use, there is currently no role or vision identified for the mobility hubs or policies to guide their development and redevelopment.
- There is the opportunity to enhance the existing Official Plan to include enabling policies, interim policies, and implementation policies for Mobility Hubs (see section G for more discussion).
- Mobility Hubs are currently not reflected in the city's land use schedules including settlement patterns and the city's comprehensive land use plan (Schedules A and B). Definitions and language in the Official Plan will be considered.

## **B. Revise Guiding Principles in the Official Plan for Placemaking**

**Issue:** Section 3.0 Guiding Principles (Part I – Policy Framework) of the Official Plan summarizes the urban and rural environment desired for the City of Burlington. At the beginning of the Official Plan Review, an analysis of the Guiding Principles indicated that they generally remain valid. However, it was recognized that each of the major studies undertaken in the Official Plan Review had the potential to influence modifications to the Guiding Principles. Through the MHOC Study and the Commercial Strategy Study “placemaking” has been identified as a crucial element to realizing vibrant mixed use places including Mobility Hubs. Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces and communities. It involves including people who currently or may potentially in the future, live, work, learn and play, in the discussion of designing public spaces that reflect shared value and support healthy communities.

### **Status:**

- Section 3.0 Guiding Principles in the Official Plan currently includes eight guiding principles. Some of the concepts central to placemaking are interspersed but there are opportunities to enhance the guiding principles.
- Principle a), *Attractive and Livable*, speaks to the desired outcome of placemaking but does not address this concept directly. Principle d), *Community Identity* begins to consider the importance of place and unique areas in the city but currently only recognizes the downtown.

## **C. Update the transportation policies and schedules in the Official Plan in concert with the Transportation Master Plan to recognize the role of Mobility Hubs and connectors as an integral part of the city-wide transportation system**

**Issue:** In setting-up the Official Plan Review work plan, a key objective was to effectively coordinate land use, transportation, and transit. This coordination is an important driver in the success of Mobility Hubs. The means to this end was considering the Official Plan Review and the Transportation Master Plan update simultaneously. In order to support the development of the mobility hubs, each with their own unique land use, transportation and transit characteristics, new transportation policies need to be considered. With the increasing focus on walking, cycling, and transit, the City should strengthen policies in both the Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan.

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## Status:

- The Official Plan includes extensive transportation policies in Part II - Functional Policy. The principles speak to supporting all modes of transportation however the policies predominantly address the road network.
- The Transportation Master Plan update project will address current and future transportation needs in Burlington. The project vision reflects the City's goal of taking a multi-modal approach in developing a complete and integrated transportation system that allows people to travel more efficiently in whatever way they choose.
- The current Transportation Master Plan, while it notes the importance of a multimodal transportation system, still primarily focuses on the infrastructure requirements of the automobile. There are opportunities to improve that alignment through the Official Plan Review and Transportation Master Plan update.
- The Official Plan includes a classification of transportation facilities. There is the opportunity to align them with the [City's intensification strategy](#). There are opportunities to identify and recognize the role of connectors in the Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan schedules. It is important to consider the role of Mobility Hubs and their connectors in the discussion of an updated urban structure for Burlington.
- There are long-standing policies in the Official Plan that identify pedestrian and transit-supportive development. While the Official Plan has policies to support all modes of transportation, there are opportunities to strengthen policy to improve implementation to meet the stated vision. Consider the development of clearer requirements to evaluate development applications potentially through interim policies in the updated Official Plan (prior to completion of master plans) and in the final Mobility Hub Master Plans to ensure that intended objectives are met. There is the opportunity to employ a variety of planning tools to encourage the kinds of development envisioned.
- There are opportunities to work through the Transportation Master Plan to elevate the importance of the desired long-term transit service network in the city. Policy should be included in the Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan to ensure that the permitted land uses, densities and overall mix continue to support the achievement of our long-term transit service network.

- The Official Plan Review includes a work plan complementary to the Transportation Master Plan called Movement and Connectivity. Through the Transportation Master Plan update project, many opportunities for alignment will be identified and addressed in the Official Plan.

## **D. Build a strategy to promote office development in the Mobility Hubs**

**Issue:** As identified in the Employment Lands briefing note, currently, there are a limited number of vacant employment sites capable of developing into vibrant transit-supportive mixed use employment nodes in the city. This discussion will be influenced by the other major studies that form part of the Official Plan Review, namely the Employment Lands and Commercial Strategy Studies. In order to attract high-rise office development and other compatible employment uses, public investment will be required to leverage and distinguish these unique areas in the City. A strategy that addresses market opportunities, infrastructure requirements, design considerations and implementation measures will be required to promote and attract office development within Mobility Hubs/Major Transit Station Areas and the Urban Growth Centre.

### **Status:**

- The Official Plan already identifies the Urban Growth Centre as an important place to accommodate employment.
- Municipalities in Ontario have limited tools to ensure that planned mixed use areas actually deliver a mix of uses including a wide range of high quality employment type uses. It will be critical to highlight the range of tools with the potential to ensure a true mix of places to live, work, learn and play in these mixed use areas, particularly those areas which will see significant change over the planning period.
- The market, on its own, is unlikely to bring these desired uses to these important areas of the city. There is the potential for the City to take the role of incentivizing and/or regulating these desired uses.
- As mentioned, OPA 59 was the first time these Major Transit Station Areas were treated differently within the Official Plan. Leading up to OPA 59, a GO Station Lands Intensification Study (2006) more generally assessed the level of intensification and considered some mixing of uses in the lands within 500 meters of the stations. The study, while recommending intensification around all three stations, did not recommend residential uses in the employment lands at Appleby and Aldershot GO station areas where the employment uses

were to be preserved. Some mixed use residential was recommended for the Burlington GO station area. Policy revisions were consequently made as part of OPA 59 to reflect this.

- Three of the five “Target Employment Sectors” identified in the City of Burlington Employment Lands Study Phase 2 Final Report have locational and infrastructure requirements that match well with the vision of Mobility Hubs and the Urban Growth Centre as special mixed use areas in the City. Namely Information Technology, Financial Services and Business Services all require prestige-type settings. Financial Services and Business Services also require access to on-site amenities and proximity to off-site services which again would be supported by the vision for Mobility Hubs. For more details see Figure 3-20: Target Employment Sectors Locational and Infrastructure Requirements in the Employment Lands Study Phase 2 Final Report.

## **E. Consider transit-oriented mixed use places including Mobility Hubs in the city-wide system**

**Issue:** Although the MHOC Study was scoped to focus on the two provincially-designated mobility hubs (Burlington GO station area and the Urban Growth Centre) and the two City-identified mobility hubs (Aldershot and Appleby GO station areas), early on, the study Terms of Reference and the Official Plan Review Movement and Connectivity work plan recognized the importance of connecting other transit nodes throughout the city. These include Mobility Hubs, Major Transit Station Areas and other destinations – all will be considered as part of the Official Plan Review.

### **Status:**

- While “Mobility Hubs” is a key concept derived from the Big Move – it responds to a specific context (e.g. location, regional rail, ridership, etc.) While the four have been identified as Mobility Hubs in response to their specific context, there is the opportunity to recognize and support the planning and development of other transit nodes (existing and future) in the city-wide system.
- A number of inputs including the other major Official Plan Review studies and public consultation will be considered together to identify and address other potential transit nodes including mixed use areas.
- The Commercial Strategy Study consultants proposed the deletion of the commercial hierarchy in favour of a range of mixed use places. The findings of the Commercial Strategy Study and

the MHOC Study will be considered together to arrive at mixed use policy that supports the city's urban structure.

- Experience throughout Ontario has shown that very careful development of mixed use policies and a detailed understanding of the available tools are needed to achieve the desired mixed uses (i.e. form, mix, relationships).

## **F. Consider preparation of Community Improvement Plans that specifically apply to Mobility Hubs**

**Issue:** The Official Plan currently includes Community Improvement Plan policies for designated areas that require community improvement and/or where change is anticipated. With the City's anticipated shift to intensification and redevelopment over the planning period these areas have been identified as being subject to significant change in the long term. New approaches to supporting the desired development will be required.

### **Status:**

- The Official Plan already includes policy enabling development of Community Improvements Plans. Policy states that Community Improvement Plans "shall be prepared and adopted to stimulate private investment and to ensure the effectiveness of public expenditure".
- The current Official Plan does not direct that specific Community Improvement Plans be undertaken. Although there are policies enabling a Community Improvement Plan, a Study and Study-Area by-law are also required to initiate the process. There is the opportunity to improve language for Community Improvements Plans to more effectively address mobility hub objectives.
- The policies speak to a number of criteria for designation of Community Improvement Areas - many apply to mobility hub areas and others may be required.
- Community Improvement Plans present the opportunity to define the envisioned mixed uses for the mobility hubs (mix, form, and relationship) as well as the development of detailed requirements through which all future development applications would be evaluated.
- By developing Community Improvement Plans for Mobility Hubs, the City can direct funds and initiate a variety of planning tools to spur growth and investment. Some of the tools for

consideration are recommended in the Metrolinx Mobility Hubs Guidelines (e.g. tax incremental-based financing, municipal grants and loans, Planning Act Section 37 benefits).

## **G. Strengthen Implementation Policies in the Official Plan to address Mobility Hubs.**

### **Develop an Implementation Strategy for Mobility Hubs.**

**Issue:** The full implementation and build out of Mobility Hubs will occur incrementally over many years, involving a number of supporting studies, dedicated City resources from across the corporation, as well as involvement of multiple stakeholders, developers, and potential partners. Mobility hub planning requires a strong policy framework that includes a range of planning tools. An organizing framework and an effective implementation strategy developed through consensus are also required to address when and how work will be undertaken. Development of that policy framework, planning tools and implementation strategies will need to be considered and coordinated to enable implementation.

#### **1) Undertake detailed Mobility Hubs studies including Master Plans.**

##### **Include enabling policies in the Official Plan to support mobility hub development.**

**Issue:** The Big Move outlines minimum requirements for Mobility Hub Master Plans. The Official Plan currently does not include policy that directly addresses requirements for master plans. There is also a lack of planning tools that uniquely cater to the opportunities and requirements for mobility hub implementation.

##### **Status:**

- The Official Plan includes some planning implementation tools including provision for secondary and tertiary/neighborhood planning process. The objective for Secondary or Tertiary/Neighborhood Plan studies is to allow for the orderly and planned development of areas, communities, or neighbourhoods and to undertake supporting studies that are required.
- There is an opportunity to update the Official Plan to require detailed Mobility Hub Master Plans and supporting studies for each of the mobility hubs prior to redevelopment. The policy would outline the requirements for master plans and supporting studies – some requirements have been proposed in the MHOC Study, building on minimum requirements

identified in the Big Move. Staff will require further review of these and other potential requirements.

- There is an opportunity to adopt completed Mobility Hub Master Plans into the Official Plan to receive formal Council-approved status in the Official Plan so that there is clear and direct policy guidance for the implementation of mobility hubs.
- Other enabling policies including those proposed in the MHOC Study should be considered to support mobility hub development. For example, enabling policies could include reduced parking requirements within mobility hubs and policies to allow surface parking as interim use on site, provided that development applications effectively demonstrate how they will be intensified in future phases. There is also the opportunity to strengthen policies to enable the use of development incentives to spur development at mobility hubs.

## 2) Develop a phasing strategy for intensification areas including Mobility Hubs.

### **Continue dialog with local utilities.**

**Issue:** Coordination of land use, transportation and transit infrastructure, and local and regional servicing is important for effectively implementing mobility hubs. There is an opportunity to develop a phasing strategy to guide the coordination of transit, transportation, and infrastructure planning for intensification areas in the city. The costs of upgrading or developing major infrastructure has the potential to be significant, particularly if that infrastructure is being pursued out of order identified in the Regional Capital Master Planning or if that infrastructure has not yet been contemplated. A phasing strategy for intensification areas, collaboration with the Region and other utility providers, and identification of ways to provide public investment to spur private investment will be required.

### **Status:**

- The Official Plan currently includes a section on the Phasing of Development in the Functional policies. This section emphasizes the need for services to achieve the City's development objectives. The objectives highlight providing municipal services to meet future needs efficiently and economically, based on the financial capability of the City and Region to provide services and identify the importance of coordination of the provision of that infrastructure.

- The policies in the Phasing of Development section relate specifically to the Alton Community. There is the opportunity to refocus these policies by shifting them from a Greenfield planning context to a redevelopment and intensification planning context to include Mobility Hubs.
- The existing Official Plan includes Functional Policies related to utilities but does not currently include consideration of municipal services provided by the Region of Halton such as water and wastewater.

### **3) Develop an implementation strategy and timeline that prioritizes and resources future Mobility Hubs work**

**Issue:** Building on stage 1 Mobility Hubs work (consideration of Mobility Hubs in the city-wide system as part of the Official Plan Review), stage 2 work will entail detailed mobility hub studies including master plans. An implementation strategy is required to thoughtfully prioritize the future work and to ensure that the work is adequately resourced. An implementation strategy developed through consensus will help Council make decisions about funding, dedication of staff resources and timing, and enable coordination of work both internally in the City amongst departments as well as with agencies such as Metrolinx and the Region and other potential partners.

**Status:**

- The MHOC Study identifies one potential recommended timeline for the implementation of mobility hubs and assumes that the City will lead future mobility hub studies.
- Discussion with Council, staff, and the public will inform the prioritization of work and the final implementation timeline. Additional scoping will be required for each of the projects (e.g. Mobility Hubs Communication Plan, Office Attraction Study, Burlington Go Mobility Hub Study and Community Improvement Plan) identified in the MHOC Study as well as the range of work needed for each unique mobility hub (e.g. coordinating with the Region and local utilities on servicing needs).

## **a. Define Priorities**

- Planning for transit-oriented development at Mobility Hubs will require definition of priorities and discussions with the community about those priorities (e.g. on topics such as use of land, resources and infrastructure).
- A mobility hub hierarchy has been proposed in the MHOC Study reflecting one potential scenario.
- In prioritizing future work for Mobility Hubs, a number of approaches may be considered and is proposed to be discussed at the upcoming Council Workshop.

## **b. Dedicate necessary corporate resources to implement Mobility Hubs**

- As discussed in the MHOC Study and staff transmittal report, significant corporate resources are anticipated for the implementation of mobility hubs.
- The MHOC Study identifies potential lead departments within the City of Burlington.
- Mobility Hubs studies and projects will need to be scoped to determine the level of staff resourcing, timing, and funds required.

## **c. Explore potential partnerships**

- Through the MHOC Study, significant collaboration occurred internally across several departments through the Steering Committee as well as with key agencies including Metrolinx and the Region.
- There is the opportunity to continue building these relationships and to effectively coordinate mobility hubs work.
- There is also the opportunity to explore future partnership and funding opportunities with Metrolinx and other potential partners. The MHOC Study recommends consideration of public-private partnerships and alternate funding arrangements. These opportunities may be explored through

discussions with agencies, potential developers, land owners, and other stakeholders.

#### **d. Consider the development of interim strategies**

- A number of potential interim strategies are identified in the MHOC Study. These strategies are intended to be considered after the updated Official Plan has been approved, but potentially prior to the completion of Mobility Hub Master Plans.
- Some interim strategies identified in the MHOC Study include:
  - Using the vision and guiding principles for Mobility Hubs included the Official Plan to evaluate proposals and developing additional requirements for site plan review;
  - Developing a preliminary massing strategy to help illustrate built form recommendations (e.g. height, building location and orientation, form, etc.)
  - Requiring applicants to submit an area contextual plan to illustrate how proposed building fits on their site and its relationships with adjacent sites and within the overall mobility hub area; and
  - Undertaking demonstration projects at key sites to set a precedent that would shape future development at the hub.
- Staff will require further review of these and other potential interim strategies to assess whether they are suitable for the City of Burlington's mobility hubs.

## 4. Next Steps

Staff will be using the discussion with Council and the findings of the MHOC Study to:

- Undertake additional consultation with the public and agencies in the development of mobility hub policy directions for the Official Plan (Fall 2014).
- Bring forward final policy directions for mobility hubs as part of the Official Plan for Council consideration (2015).
- Report on all proposed amendments to the Official Plan and specifically amendments to the urban structure, inclusive of mobility hubs, upon the conclusion of the municipal comprehensive review (2015).

### **In preparation for the Council Workshop on Mobility Hubs on June 16, 2014:**

- Please review this briefing note and consider the Potential Policy Directions presented in Section 3. This document will be a useful primer for the discussion. Staff is available to address technical questions in advance or following the Workshop.
- If you have questions or areas of interest that you would like to highlight in advance of the session please contact:

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## Links to Additional Information:

For general reference please find links below to relevant staff reports:

Committee Date	Council Date	Report Details
May 26, 2014	June 9, 2014	<p>PB-54-14: <a href="#">Official Plan Review: Transmittal of Mobility Hubs Opportunities and Constraints Study</a></p> <p>To view the <b>staff and consultant Study Overview presentations</b>, please click the report link above.</p>
December 2, 2013	December 9, 2013	<p>PB-89-13: <a href="#">Official Plan Review: Revised Comprehensive Work Plan, Schedule and Budget Allocation</a></p>
August 27, 2012	January 28, 2013	<p>PB-53-12: <a href="#">Official Plan Review: Comprehensive Work Plan Appendices A-C; Appendices D-I; Appendices J-M; Appendices N-O</a></p>
January 31, 2008	February 25, 2008	<p>PL-1/08: <a href="#">Burlington Intensification Study: Preliminary 2031 Residential and Employment Intensification Estimates</a></p>