

Date: 2019-03-01

Subject: **Status Update – Planning for Queen Street–Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit**

Contact: Doug Rieger, Senior Manager, Service Development, Transit
905.874.2750 ext. 62349, doug.rieger@brampton.ca

Recommendations:

1. That the report from Doug Rieger, Senior Manager, Service Development, Transit, dated March 1, 2019, to the Committee of Council Meeting of March 20, 2019, re: **Status Update – Planning for Queen Street–Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit**, be received.

Overview:

- **At the December 12, 2018 meeting of Council, as part of resolution CW331-2018, staff were directed to report back on the status of the Queen Street Transit Master Plan study and the timeline for commencing an environmental assessment (EA) – for future Provincial and Federal funding considerations; furthermore, staff were also directed to consider electric buses for any BRT project.**
- **Since 2015, Brampton has been planning for rapid transit along the Queen Street corridor and advocating for Metrolinx to play a larger role in advancing this initiative. In June 2018, Metrolinx initiated a BRT Planning Study and Initial Business Case (IBC) for the Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT corridor. The Metrolinx IBC will assess the benefits, costs, and impacts of several BRT configuration options to identify the best approach to invest in BRT infrastructure in the Queen Street-Highway 7 corridor – for future Provincial and Federal funding considerations.**
- **The IBC is being funded by Metrolinx under their overall Project Development Program which aims to advance key projects under the Metrolinx 2041 Regional Transportation Plan; Queen Street - Highway 7 BRT is one of those key projects. The decision by Metrolinx to fund and lead a BRT planning study and Initial Business Case was favorable news for Brampton. It was a major step forward, placing Brampton in a stronger position in advancing the planning for rapid transit in the Queen Street corridor.**
- **The IBC is subject to review and approval by Metrolinx before the Queen**

9.2.4-2

Street-Highway 7 BRT proceeds to procurement for EA, preliminary design, and Preliminary Design Business Case. Staff are hopeful that this next step will begin later in 2019. Staff will provide further updates to Council upon the completion of the Metrolinx IBC currently scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2019.

- **Metrolinx and Brampton staff will also be providing a progress update on Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT as part of the upcoming public consultation for the Brampton Transit 2019 Service Plan – scheduled to take place during the last week of March and the first week of April 2019.**
- **In response to Council's direction regarding future consideration of electric buses, Brampton staff will consult with Metrolinx on the possibility of incorporating electric buses and the associated charging stations into the high-level costing of Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT infrastructure.**

Background:

Since 2015, Brampton has been planning for rapid transit along the Queen Street corridor and advocating for Metrolinx to play a larger role in advancing this initiative. The City of Brampton, through Brampton Transit, is now working with Metrolinx staff and their consultant to develop a framework for advancing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the Queen Street-Highway 7 corridor. Called the Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT Planning Study and Initial Business Case (IBC), the IBC will recommend a preferred approach to upgrading the existing Züm service in the corridor to full rapid transit standard, along with extending the Viva BRT Rapidway to Brampton, while considering the potential for further upgrades in infrastructure, technology, and capacity over the longer term as warranted by demand, operational requirements, and technology availability.

The IBC study area, as shown in **Appendix 'A'**, is centred on the Queen Street-Highway 7 corridor between Mississauga Road in Brampton in the west to Vaughan Metropolitan Centre in the City of Vaughan in the east. Because construction is underway on the Viva BRT Rapidway in the Highway 7 corridor in York Region, all of the BRT configuration options for the Queen Street-Highway 7 corridor will need to connect into the future Rapidway at Helen Street which is east of Islington Avenue in Vaughan.

Current Situation:

Metrolinx Planning for Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT

In the last report to Committee of Council – dated June 7, 2018 for the June 20 Committee Council meeting – staff informed Committee members that a BRT Planning Study and Initial Business Case (IBC) for the Queen Street-Highway 7 corridor was being initiated by Metrolinx Planning staff. This was a positive decision by Metrolinx and a major step forward in advancing the planning for rapid transit in the Queen Street corridor in Brampton. Rapid transit in the Queen Street corridor is not only a priority in

9.2.4-3

Brampton, it was identified by Metrolinx in 2013 as a “Next Wave” project – and it was reaffirmed as an “In-Development” project under the Metrolinx 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) released in Spring/Summer 2018.

Since 2014, the Provincial government has made commitments to advance the continual planning and design of “Next Wave” transit projects in the GTHA. The IBC recently funded by Metrolinx is part of an overall Project Development Program which aims to advance key projects under the Metrolinx 2041 RTP – Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT is one of those key projects. In recognition of Metrolinx’s role as the agency that plans, coordinates, and sets priorities for the implementation of the RTP, the inter-regional nature of Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT, and the need to garner support from Peel Region, York Region, and the City of Vaughan as stakeholders, it was determined that Metrolinx would be best positioned to lead the planning effort for Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT.

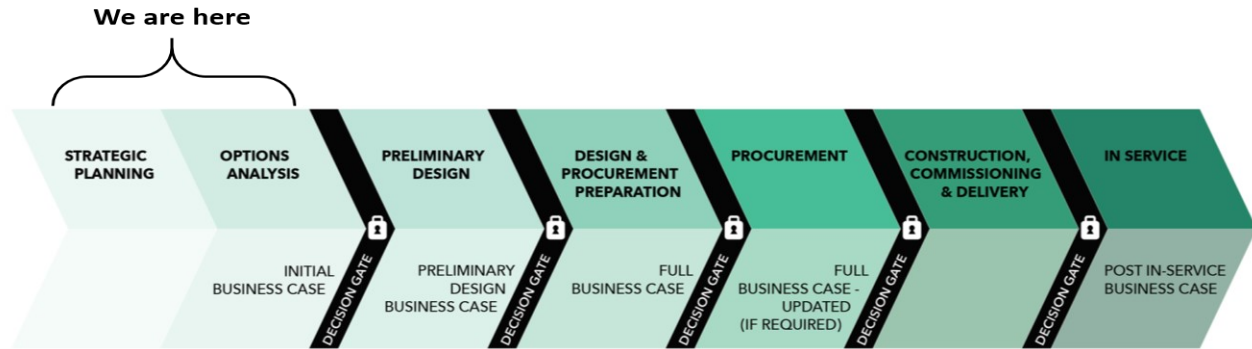
In order to provide full technical support to Metrolinx on the planning for Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT, and avoid duplication of effort with the Metrolinx IBC, staff determined that it would be prudent to discontinue the City’s Queen Street Transit Master Plan assignment. The IBC itself would provide the information required by Metrolinx to determine the best BRT investment option for preliminary design and environmental assessment (EA). As part of the steps taken to consolidate efforts with Metrolinx, some of the previous master planning effort has now been diverted towards preliminary planning for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) along the Queen Street BRT corridor, since planning for MTSAs is outside of Metrolinx’s mandate.

Metrolinx Benefits Management Process

Planning for Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT now follows the Metrolinx Benefits Management Process, illustrated in **Appendix ‘B’**. A Metrolinx Initial Business Case (IBC) is the first step of a stage-gate process for evaluating the benefits, costs, and impacts of major transit investments by Metrolinx. From project inception to the start of construction, decision gates are applied at four major milestones – also known as “stage gates” – as identified below:

| Business Case | Decision Gate |
|--|---|
| Initial Business Case | Feasibility and Options Analysis (recommendations) |
| Preliminary Design Business Case | Preliminary Design and Environmental Assessment (recommendations) |
| Full Business Case | Detailed Design and Procurement Preparation |
| Updated Full Business Case (if required) | Procurement |

9.2.4-4



For the Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT, the IBC will compare various BRT infrastructure options and select the best investment option for further refinement during preliminary design and EA. Recent precedents from across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) have shown that an IBC is typically prepared to help secure Provincial funding for EA and preliminary design. As such, the Queen Street-Highway 7 IBC will be subject to review and approval by Metrolinx before the BRT can proceed to the EA stage.

If successful, procurement by Metrolinx for an EA, preliminary design, and Preliminary Design Business Case (PDBC) assignment is expected to begin later in 2019. Capital funding consideration by the Provincial government – for construction – will be informed, in part, by Metrolinx’s decision on the PDBC.

With Metrolinx now leading the planning work for Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT, engagement with Peel Region and York Region staff now falls under the purview of the Metrolinx IBC. Peel Region and York Region staff are involved in the technical working group for the IBC, and Brampton staff have been providing support to Metrolinx staff to ensure that Peel Region staff are consulted throughout the process for their input.

June 2018 Public Information Centres

Comments from these sessions were positive and the public was receptive to the rationale for choosing BRT as the first step in implementing rapid transit in the Queen Street corridor

While individual preferences differ between widening Queen Street to build dedicated BRT lanes versus converting two traffic lanes into BRT lanes to maintain the current width of the roadway, there is common recognition of the value of providing transit vehicles their own lanes in a congested corridor. Overall feedback to date gave staff an early indication of the issues that will need to be addressed as part of future preliminary design and environmental assessment. At this early stage of the planning process, staff anticipate that findings from the IBC – regarding the benefits, costs, and impacts of various BRT infrastructure options – should help explain key trade-offs between widening Queen Street, converting two traffic lanes on Queen Street to achieve a Complete Street, or not providing dedicated lanes to transit at all.

9.2.4-5

Spring Progress Update on the Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT

There will be a progress update on the Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT as part of the public consultation on the Brampton Transit 2019 Service Plan. Metrolinx and Brampton staff will be on hand to answer questions regarding the planning for Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT. Three sessions have been scheduled as follows:

| Date | Time | Location |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Thursday, March 28 | 5pm to 8pm | City Hall Conservatory |
| Monday, April 1 | 3pm to 6pm | Bramalea Transit Terminal |
| Thursday, April 4 | 5pm to 8pm | Century Gardens Recreation Centre |

BRT Planning Study and IBC Schedule

The BRT Planning Study and IBC is tracking towards completion by the end of Q2 2019. Metrolinx and Brampton staff are currently at the early stage of analyzing various infrastructure configuration options for Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT. Major milestone dates, at the time of this report, are as follows:

| Description | Target Timeframe |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Progress update as part of the Brampton Transit 2019 Service Plan public meetings | March 28, April 1, and April 4 |
| IBC draft recommendations | Q2 2019 |
| Report to Committee of Council | Summer 2019 |
| Public meeting on IBC recommendations | Summer 2019 |
| Metrolinx approval of IBC recommendations | Q3 2019 |
| Procurement for environmental assessment, preliminary design, and Preliminary Business Case (subject to Metrolinx approval on the IBC) | Q4 2019 (to be confirmed) |

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

None at this time.

Other Implications:

None at this time.

Strategic Plan:

Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT is part of Regional Connections – one of the six areas of focus for the Strategic Plan. It is a key initiative that builds on the strength of existing local and regional networks, achieves seamless integration within the overall multi-

9.2.4-6

modal transportation network, and connects Brampton with the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) and beyond.

Living the Mosaic – 2040 Vision:

This report directly aligns with the vision that Brampton will be a mosaic of safe, integrated **transportation** choices and new modes, contributing to civic sustainability, and emphasizing walking, cycling, and transit. Planning for Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT is in alignment with Action #4-3 regarding the development of an integrated transit network – particularly with regards to designation of bus lanes on streets and more connections to the subway system, Action #4-2 regarding Complete Streets, and Action #3-4 regarding “Queen’s Boulevard”.

Conclusion:

The decision by Metrolinx to fund and lead a BRT planning study and Initial Business Case was favorable news for Brampton. It was a major step forward, placing Brampton in a stronger position in advancing the planning for rapid transit in the Queen Street corridor. With Metrolinx now leading the BRT planning effort under their business case and project development process, the Queen Street-Highway 7 BRT corridor is now in the best position to secure funding consideration for future work on preliminary design, environmental assessment, and Preliminary Design Business Case. Staff will provide further updates to Council upon the completion of the Metrolinx IBC currently scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2019.

Approved by:

Alex Milojevic,
General Manager, Transit

Approved by:

Joseph Pittari,
Acting Chief Administrative
Officer/Commissioner,
Corporate Services

Attachments:

Appendix A – Study Area: Queen Street - Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit Planning Study and Initial Business Case

Appendix B – Metrolinx Benefits Management Process

9.2.4-7

Report authored by: Hank Wang, Strategic Transit Planner, Transit

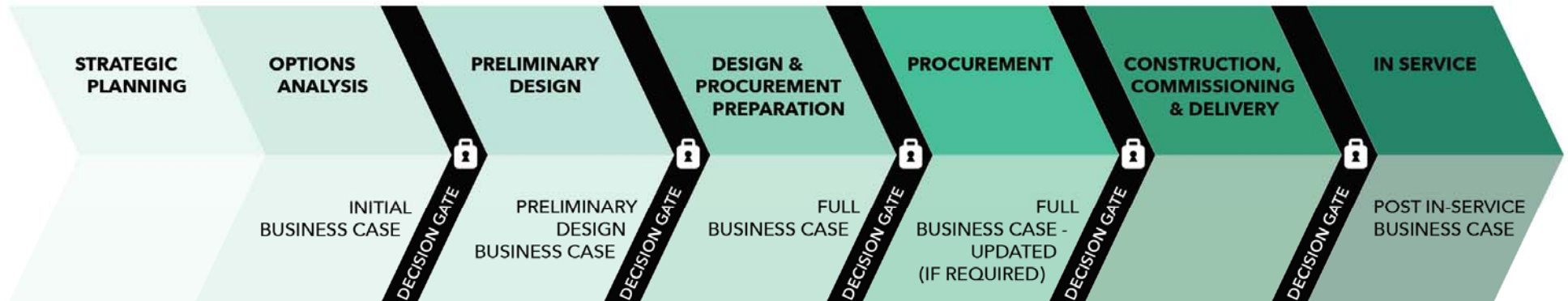
9.2.4-8

Appendix A – Study Area: Queen Street-Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit Planning Study and Initial Business Case



Appendix B – Metrolinx Benefits Management Process

STAGE-GATE PROCESS



Identifies problem statement and defines benefits that the project needs to deliver.



Evaluates options and determines a preferred option. Typical point at which funding for planning and preliminary design is secured.



Refines preferred option, further clarifying scope and cost. Typical point at which funding for procurement and construction is secured.



Develops project framework, designs and requirements used as the basis for procurement.



Procures the project.



Delivers and commissions the project.



After the asset is in service, monitors the benefits and costs to identify opportunities for enhancements and lessons learned.