



REGION OF WATERLOO

PLANNING, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
Community Planning

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

DATE: February 28, 2012

FILE CODE: D10-20

SUBJECT: REGION OF WATERLOO (KING/VICTORIA) TRANSIT HUB

RECOMMENDATION:

For information.

SUMMARY:

Over the past several years, the Region has purchased a number of properties located at or near the intersection of King and Victoria Streets in the City of Kitchener for the purpose of developing a transit hub. The development of the transit hub will not only link the future Rapid Transit, GRT conventional transit, GO and Via train services and GO and other inter-city bus lines into one seamless public transportation system, it will also serve as a significant catalyst for development within this part of the City of Kitchener known as the Innovation District.

The project is being undertaken in four phases; site preparation, determination of the form of development, determination of the procurement model, and site construction. Phase 1 of the project is being undertaken by a multi-departmental team under the direction of the Commissioner of Planning Housing and Community Services. Phases 2 and 3 of this work is being overseen by a Project Team consisting of Regional staff, City of Kitchener staff, political representatives and agencies anticipated to use the transit hub once constructed. Oversight of Phase 4 of the project (construction of the multi-model transit hub and associated private or public sector uses) will be dependant on the procurement model chosen as part of Phase 3.

The development of the transit hub is directly linked to a number of other ongoing Regional projects including: the Corridor Development Strategy; the Weber Street grade separation; the King Street grade separation; the development of the Rapid Transit System; and the realignment of the Grand River Transit (GRT) conventional transit system. Coordination of these projects is of a high priority in order to ensure proper alignment of schedules, construction staging and interfaces, and public consultation/information processes. All of these projects are being undertaken in direct consultation and coordination with City of Kitchener staff.

Various studies are currently being undertaken to ready the site for future use as a transit hub. The site has also been prepared for use as a temporary parking area to facilitate the extension of GO Rail service to the Region.

REPORT:

Project Background

Over the past several years the Region has purchased of a number of properties located at or near the intersection of King and Victoria Streets in the City of Kitchener for the purpose of development of a transit hub that could be constructed on the resulting parcel of land in order to connect the future rapid transit system and Grand River Transit to inter-city bus and rail systems serving the

Region. As part of the process, the Region targeted a number of properties totalling approximately 1.6 hectares (four acres) of land for purchase, with the majority of these lands intended to play key roles in the development of the facility. This report provides an update to the process.

Project Description

Subject to future decisions by Regional Council, the proposed King/Victoria Transit Hub would be a facility designed to serve the intra and inter-Regional transportation needs of the public by bringing together access to and interconnections between various forms of transportation into one centralized facility. This project involves development of significant transportation infrastructure including: new train platforms to serve inter-city GO train and VIA Rail services; bus bays to support Grand River Transit (GRT) and intercity bus services such as GO bus and other private sector carriers; underground and at-grade connections to and from the new Regional rapid transit system (light rail); as well as the facilities necessary to support and integrate other transportation modes such as taxis, car share, cycling and pedestrians. The proposed King/Victoria Transit Hub will potentially be integrated into a combination of public and private sector higher density developments on the site, possibly including mixed use commercial/office development served by a large multi-level underground commercial parking structure.

This project is both an important component in the development of an integrated inter and intra-city transit system for the Region of Waterloo as well as a catalyst to support future development within the City of Kitchener's planned Innovation District. City of Kitchener will play a major role in this project both through participation on the Project Team as described in this report and through consultation and the fulfillment of various roles associated with the completion of various studies and the processing of development applications.

Project Phases / Management

While there will be crossover among activities and particularly timing, the project breaks down into four relatively distinct components:

- Phase 1 - acquisition and preparation of the site for development, including its temporary use as a site for parking associated with GO Rail service (this phase will include a public consultation process related to the future use of the property as part of the *Planning Act* process (currently underway – anticipated completion mid 2013);
- Phase 2 - determination of the form and scale of development of the site, including development of the associated business case and public consultation process (currently underway – anticipated completion early 2013);
- Phase 3 - determination of the business case and procurement model for the development (e.g., public sector owned and operated, public private partnership commonly known as a P3) or some alternative combination of the two (currently anticipated for completion - mid 2013, with a Request for Proposals (RFP) being issued shortly thereafter); and
- Phase 4 - construction through to opening of the facility (construction of the Hub and the associated development has to be staged with the King Street grade separation and rapid transit projects. While construction of inter-face structures may occur concurrent with the King Street grade separation, the need for use of the Hub site for staging and temporary access for these projects means that construction of the main facilities and associated development on the site is currently anticipated to begin in late 2016 / early 2017.

Phase 1 is currently being undertaken under the direction of the Commissioner of Planning Housing and Community Services with Kevin Eby serving as the Project Director. A team of representatives from Community Planning, Transportation Planning, Facilities Management and Legal are currently working on the completion of Phase 1.

Phases 2 and 3 are intended to be undertaken by the same group of Regional staff in consultation with a Project Team. A draft Project Charter and Timeline has been developed for consideration by the Project Team as part of the first meeting which is currently being arranged. Political representatives on the Project Team include: Jim Wideman (Regional Councillor); Jean Haalboom (Regional Councillor); Sean Strickland (Regional Councillor); and Dan Glenn-Graham (City of Kitchener Councillor). In addition to the political representatives, the Project Team includes Regional staff representation from Transportation Planning, Transit Services, Facilities, Rapid Transit, the King Street Grade Separation Project Team, Legal Services, Finance, Marketing and Communications, Cultural Heritage Planning, City of Kitchener representation from Planning, Engineering, and Economic Development as well as representatives from GO Transit, Metrolinx, GEXR (Guelph Exeter Railway), VIA Rail and CN Rail.

The process for completion and management of Phase 4 of the project is entirely dependent upon the procurement model selected in Phase 3.

Progress to Date on Key Items

1. **Planning Applications** – Formal applications and all associated studies required to support the submission of an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-Law Amendment have been prepared and are expected to be submitted to the City of Kitchener within the next several weeks. The intent of these applications is to allow for the broadest range of uses and higher density appropriate for the site so as to eliminate constraints moving into the design and procurement processes. The GSP Group has been retained to assist with these *Planning Act* application processes. Regional Council will be kept apprised of the processing of these applications, and Regional staff will seek any required direction prior to key decision points in the process.
2. **Environmental Assessment** – The required environmental assessment process is planned to be undertaken through the completion of a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Schedule 'B' that will be undertaken concurrently with the *Planning Act* processes noted above.
3. **Soil/Groundwater Investigation and Remediation** – Preliminary site investigations have been undertaken as part of the ongoing activity on the site. Given the known contamination of the groundwater from a former industry in the area (which is currently the subject of ongoing remediation efforts secured as part of the development of the former industrial site lands), development of the property will require the completion of a Risk Assessment completed in accordance with Ministry of the Environment processes. It is currently anticipated that a consultant will be hired early in the spring of 2012 to prepare and submit the risk assessment to the Ministry for approval.
4. **Preliminary Design Study and Station Area Access Plan** – One of the key functions of the facility is the facilitation of the movement of people between various forms of transportation. Regional staff through staff Report No. P-12-033 is recommending the selection of a consultant to undertake this work. City of Kitchener staff participated in the consultant selection process and concurs with the recommendation.
5. **Temporary GO Parking** - An application for site plan approval has been submitted to the City to use the site temporarily to meet parking needs in the area. This parking is currently anticipated to serve two functions. The first is for use by GO Transit riders (please see Report No. P-11-

094). GO Transit will be temporarily using the VIA rail station currently located at Weber St. and Victoria Street to facilitate the extension of GO Rail service until such time as the facility is constructed and ready for its use.

Next Steps

Regional staff will continue with the completion of Phase 1 of the project as described in this report. The initial meeting of the Project Team struck to oversee Phases 2 and 3 of the project meeting will be scheduled for March 2012. The draft Project Charter and proposed timelines for the project will be finalized through the Project Team process at that time.

Area Municipal Consultation/Coordination

City of Kitchener staff participated in a tour and workshop that explored ideas for development of the site in July 2011, including possible uses in addition to transportation facilities. City of Kitchener staff is also overseeing the review and approval of the required *Planning Act* applications. The City of Kitchener will be represented on the Project Team by three staff members, one each from planning, engineering and economic development, and by Councillor Dan Glenn-Graham.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

This initiative directly supports Strategic Action 3.4.1, "Implement the multimodal transportation hub at Victoria and King Streets".

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Funding for the land acquisitions and other costs for the King/Victoria Multi-Modal Hub Project transit facility was provided from the Council-approved \$25,000,000 budget for property acquisitions and other project development expenditures for the RT project. Funding for the proposed consulting assignment would be provided from the project budget. Once the Project strategy is finalized and approved by Council, the costs could be transferred to that project budget.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

Staff from Transportation Planning, Legal Services, Facilities Management, Finance and Rapid Transit has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

ATTACHMENTS:

NIL

PREPARED BY: *Kevin Eby*, Director, Multi-Modal Transit Hub

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