Sustainable Transit-Oriented Development

Mid-Sized Cities Researcher + Practitioner Roundtable
May 16, 2018
Museum London, London, Ontario
Getting on Board
Learning from planning and engagement around rapid transit projects in Ontario

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http://www.pembina.org/pub/getting-on-board

Transit supportive development and city-building

Brief 1: Building a framework

Growth is an opportunity for great city-building

Governments are growing faster. For example, in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) — the wide strip surrounding the City of Toronto, stretching north to Barrie and south to the Niagara Region, — it is expected that the population will grow by 9.5 million, or 1.5 million in total. In the Greater Toronto and Muskoka region, another important urban center, the population is expected to grow by 2.5 million by 2031, with a majority of that growth expected within the City of Toronto. We are the impacts of growth around us in our daily lives: increased urban development and renewal, by highway and transit lines, and in rising housing prices. Growth is a challenge, but it’s also an opportunity. We can harness the investment and people that growth brings to local better, more connected cities.

City building refers to the process of planning and development in cities. Some city building involves long-term public-private revenue. For example, the Peel Region, east of Toronto, is expected to grow by 75% in 2031. The costs and opportunities for great city-building are essential to cities like this.

TRANSIT...

THE BIG PICTURE IN MID-SIZE CITIES
WHY IS TRANSIT IMPORTANT?
THE USUAL REASONS...
MOVE PEOPLE
OFFER AFFORDABLE MOBILITY

“11,000 adults (5% of London) are working poor”
ALLEVIATE CONGESTION
72 PEOPLE

60 CARS

1 BUS

IMAGE SOURCE:
Muenster Planning Office, August 2001
REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS & OTHER EMISSIONS
REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION
PROMOTE ACTIVE FORM OF MOBILITY
TWO LESS
USUAL REASONS...
1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1 in 3 Londoners are MILLENNIALS: born between 1980 and 2000.
Make London millennial-friendly, advises local entrepreneur

David Billson writes that London is not attracting enough of the millennials fleeing Toronto

I think there are three core reasons why London is not performing as well as some other mid-sized cities in this area:

1. Proximity to Toronto
2. Signaling to millennials that they understand their wants and needs — transit, culture and community
3. London tends to receive very negative coverage in the national media
Aurora targets younger crowd with light rail, ruffles older feathers

AURORA — About 500 residents from the Heather Gardens senior living community packed the City Council chambers recently to voice their opposition to a new 400-plus-unit apartment complex near a new light-rail station.

One by one, they talked about how it would encroach upon their lives. Too close to the apartments, they said, would make them feel lonesome. The noise from the trains would keep them up at night. The sanding of the tracks made them feel like they were living in a train station.
2. GROWTH MANAGEMENT
The 10 Big Moves
Growing inward and upward
Shaping our City around rapid transit
Creating a cosmopolitan city - one that is culturally rich and diverse
Planning for exceptional spaces & places
INWARD & UPWARD
COSTS OF GROWTH IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS

If we keep growing how we have been...

It will cost more than 3x as much as a compact growth pattern to develop & operate

- Compact: $1.95 billion
- Hybrid: $3.09 billion
- Spread: $6.37 billion
BENIFITS OF GROWING INWARD & UPWARD

- Reduce costs – capital and operating
- Use existing infrastructure
- Healthy mobility choices
- Regenerate urban main streets
- Revitalize urban neighbourhoods
- Avoid growth into agricultural lands
- Avoid destruction of natural heritage
HOW?
Recipe

1. Create clear city structure plan
2. Integrate mobility
3. Planning permissions at nodes and along corridors
4. Deliver quality streets
5. Design for transit-oriented development
6. Offer high quality transit service
1. CREATE CLEAR CITY STRUCTURE PLAN
URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY
BUILT AREA BOUNDARY

45%
PRIMARY TRANSIT AREA

75%
2. INTEGRATE MOBILITY
Employment Clusters in London
The City-Building Framework

- Framework for Rapid Transit
- Transportation Master Plan
- London Plan
- Downtown Plan
- London on Bikes
- Shift Rapid Transit EA
- Parking Strategy
3. PLANNING PERMISSIONS AT NODES AND ALONG CORRIDORS
The London Plan Approach

Downtown
Transit Village
Rapid Transit & Urban Corridor
Shopping Area & Main Street
Neighbourhood

Transit Station
Civic Boulevard & Urban Thoroughfare
Intersecting Neighbourhood Connectors
Neighbourhood Streets
4. DELIVER QUALITY STREETS

Development Zone
Private Property
Public R-O-W

Pedestrian Zone

Vehicle Zone

Pedestrian Zone
Development Zone

PROPERTY LINE
5. DESIGN FOR TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
6. Offer high quality transit service
THANK YOU
Overview

Welcome & Introductions
1. Context: Hamilton Chamber of Commerce & city of Hamilton
2. Urban Renewal, Diversification & Growth Plans
3. Hamilton B-Line LRT Project and BLAST Plan
4. Advocacy & Community Engagement on TOD
1) Context: Hamilton Chamber of Commerce & City of Hamilton

- **Hamilton Chamber of Commerce** has operated as the "Voice of Business" in Hamilton since 1845, providing City Building leadership throughout the city's history, especially around significant infrastructure projects, from electrification and sewerification in the 19th and 20th century to Rapid Transit and Intensification in the 21st Century. We represent over 1,000 members, hailing from the business, not for profit and public sector.

- The story of Hamilton is an embodiment of the "Rust Belt" concept. Once the industrial powerhouse of the country, globalization caused a significant hollowing of the city's industrial activity in the 1980's and 1990's, causing a domino affect on commercial districts and neighbourhoods with rising vacancy rates, limited employment and investment growth.

- In the City of Hamilton, Chamber and community leadership began adopting and implementing a series of legislative and branding measures to diversify Hamilton's economy, focusing on Life Sciences, Advanced Manufacturing, IT and Digital Media, Cultural Industries. The Quality of Life assets in Hamilton and affordable real estate prices began attracting a new generation of residents, entrepreneurs and artists.

- In parallel, the "Greater Toronto - Hamilton" area became the centrepiece of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, with the Provincial Transit Agency (Metrolinx) creating the Big Move strategy for regional Go Transit and Rapid Transit within key corridors identified as prime for intensification aka **Transit Oriented Development**
2) Urban Renewal and Provincial Growth Plan

• Under the Province of Ontario’s current projections, the City of Hamilton and GTHA is expected to experience significant population growth over the next 20 years. The GTHA will continue to be one of Canada’s fastest growing areas over the next few decades. Today, the population is just over six million people. By 2031, the population is estimated to grow to 8.6 million people. The population of the Hamilton itself is planned to grow from around 550,000 residents in 2016 to just over 650,000 in 2031 and well over 700,000 in 2041.

• Much of this residential and employment growth is expected to occur in the Downtown Hamilton Urban Growth Centre, which has been specifically designated by the province to soak up our share of growth.

• The B-Line LRT Project is stage one of a larger strategy called the B-L-A-S-T Network, planned by the City of Hamilton over the next 25 years to help us grow as a city that provides an adequate balance of options for moving people. B-Line LRT, through its proximity to existing and future GO transit stations, will also serve as the spine of a network that will reach and link all corners of Hamilton, to all corners of the GTHA.
Provincial & City of Hamilton Transit Plans
Hamilton Chamber LRT Task Force

Mandate:

• Assess Hamilton's LRT project from a business perspective i.e. provide input to and assess the return on investment of LRT in Hamilton
• Engage Chamber members and the business community to provide input to the LRT project
• Provide input on how LRT is a strategic infrastructure investment for Hamilton
• Assess development options along the LRT corridors (ex. zoning; incentives).
• Comprised of Anchor Institutions, Small and Large Businesses, BIAs, City Councillors, Community Agencies, Planning firms and Academic expertise (MITL)

Activities and outcomes:

• Assessed available evidence and informed by the work of McMaster Institute for Transportation & Logistics, Planning firms, City of Hamilton and Metrolinx staff to capture the The North America Light Rail Experience and Hamilton's path to become Rapid (Transit) Ready.
• Provided a forum for Public and Private Sector stakeholders.
• Significant advocacy efforts, meetings, letters, reports, member activation with provincial Ministers, MPPs and the Premier.
Business Case for LRT

- The Corridor has an average density of over 84 Jobs and People per hectare.
- We’ve had several consecutive years of over $1 Billion in construction projects, with a number of them near the future LRT line. One of the most active housing markets in Canada for demand and price appreciation.
- Thousands of people are migrating to Hamilton every year; both due to relatively affordability compared to the GTA but also for our Quality of Life and Economic potential.
- Many major institutions like IBM and McMaster have moved downtown since many previous LRT studies were done. The growth is suggested to be even stronger moving forward.
- The B-Line project is our fair share of the “Big Move” project the province has only allocated towards rapid Transit monies.
- The Greater Toronto – Hamilton area will experience significant population growth (550,00 to 700,000+) over the next few decades. Hamilton has the potential to be an attractive destination but is competing with the rest of the GTHA and Golden Horseshoe.
- While it only serves a specific corridor of the lower city, it will kickstart a larger “BLAST” plan and position Hamilton for additional Provincial and Federal investment, which are largely calculated on ridership numbers.
- The Province of Ontario has obligated the City of Hamilton to increase population in the downtown core. We cannot keep growing towards the Green Belt and low density housing.
- Intensification and Transit Oriented Development has lower long term upkeep and more efficient tax recovery than sprawl. Hamilton’s 87-13 ratio between residential - commercial is nonoptimal
- B-Line is not a road to nowhere: If normalized by length of system, the B-Line is the sixth most successful transit line out of major North American networks. The City’s LRT Office released numbers in October 2016 predicting 12.3 - 15.1 Million riders based on frequency.
3. 2013 - 2015: Significant Community Advocacy efforts, co-ordination between the Chamber, Community and elected officials. The Light Rail Transit Technology on the "B-Line Corridor" was endorsed by City Council after staff and consultant vetting and over thirty votes.
4. Formally approved for a $1 Billion, 100% coverage by the Provincial Budget 2015 as part of the Big Move Strategy.
5. EA approvals for revised project scope approved in summer 2017
6. Initiating procurement process in Fall 2017 (RFQ/RFP). Minor delay due to request by City to Operate and Maintain.
7. RFP issued April 2018, Aiming towards achieving contract award in ~ 2018
8. Beginning major construction in 2019
9. New LRT line in service by 2024.
Merging Objectives & Next Steps: Transit, City Building and TOD

- Our evaluation of successful LRT Systems in North America showed a significant correlation between the investments into Rapid Transit, Supportive legislative and zoning policies and related concepts (Complete Streets, Inclusionary Zoning & Affordable Housing, Active Transportation etc).
- The phase two of our advocacy will now focus on Transit Oriented Development and ensuring the City creates the best conditions for maximizing economic uplift, investment and community benefits. Another project will be focusing on programming.

Success Factors for our Transit Oriented Development Work Plan.

- The legislative conditions (Urban Official Plan, Secondary Planning, Zoning Bylaws, Station Precinct strategies) related to the City’s Transit Oriented Corridor and LRT B-Line Project are strongly aligned with global best practices to maximize Transit Oriented Development.
- The city of Hamilton sees consistent investment and project applications across the LRT B-Line Corridor and low business and residential vacancy rates.
- Transit Oriented Development becomes a driving factor to increase housing supply and more critically Hamilton’s Affordability crisis.
- The City of Hamilton implements strategies to address indirect factors affecting TOD, including bus transit connectivity, aesthetic design principles, facilitation of land assembly, reduction on development red tape and engagement with developers and real estate industry.
- Greater awareness amongst elected officials, businesses, residents, community organizations and property owners and real estate developers within the Hamilton Community of the benefits and opportunities from Transit Oriented Development.
- (Long term) reduction of overall greenhouse emissions in the city of Hamilton.
- (Long term) Consideration of planning and practice within the City of Hamilton and LRT B-Line project considered as a best practice within the GTHA and beyond.
Lessons Learnt & Recommendations for Mid-Sized Communities

1) Working with a broad base of supporters: We worked with businesses, passionate city builders, resident and neighborhood organizations, students and post secondary institutions, environmental agencies, planning consulting firms and academic expertise, anchor institutions.

2) Benefits of Rapid Transit, Regional Connectivity and Transit Oriented Development need to be approached from the three sigma approach: Economic, Social, Environmental.

3) Set an ambitious vision for what your City looks like and be confident and consistent in your communications and advocacy of it. Help skeptics and opponents visualize these opportunities in their own City and the North American experience.

4) Connect these initiatives to the location of the city within a regional context. In Hamilton, a growing number of stakeholders recognizing that the Greater Toronto Hamilton area, the Toronto - KW / Canada’s Innovation Corridor are a new reality. Competition between cities for talent and investment.

5) By their nature Transportation and Planning are an obtuse and inaccessible discipline. While our Policy department engaged at that level, utilizing evidence based policy and academic literature, our comms and events strategies also prioritized our City Building Objectives.

6) Coordinate on best practices and practitioner networks outside your community. We work closely with Metrolinx, Chambers of Commerce and BIAs across Ontario, EverGreen, Pembina, TAF etc.

7) Create a full slate of communications tools, utilizing various degrees of accessibility and “populism”.
Misc: Convening Evidence Based Policy

Shaping Hamilton with Complete Streets

Benchmarking, Planning, and Promoting Transit-Oriented Intensification in Rapid Transit Station Areas

Walkability and Economic Development

How Pedestrian and Transit-Oriented Environments Attract Creative Jobs in Hamilton
March 21, 2017

To: His Worship Mayor Fred Eisenberger, City of Hamilton,
    And Member of Hamilton City Council

    Hamilton, Ontario

Dear Mayor Eisenberger and Member of Hamilton City Council,

As anchor institutions in Hamilton, we believe in the transformative potential of a robust transit system, including both traditional and rapid transit, for the health and prosperity of our city. We support the full implementation of Hamilton’s BLAST network that will enable our students, patients, employees, and our citizens to benefit from improved mobility within our city and a wider variety of transit options.

To this end, we urge the City of Hamilton to continue with the implementation of the BLAST transit network. We gratefully acknowledge and value our provincial government’s leadership in funding for the Light Rail Transit Line and Bus Rapid Transit line, as key components of the BLAST network. We fully support the staged completion of the BLAST network and the collaboration of all levels of government to complete this project together.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

[Logos of supporting organizations]
Who Would You Have to Ignore?

- Transit and planning experts
- Your own CEO, CAO and Executive
- City of Hamilton Strategic Plan, Mission and Vision
- Labour, business, environmental, transit users and anti-poverty groups
- Downtown companies, destinations and neighbourhood groups
- Developers, RAHB, HHHBA and HBBA
- Our institutions of higher learning
- Our two school boards
- Our two hospital systems
- All the top employers and leaders in Hamilton
- Young people and students groups
- Seniors groups
- Councillor Green & Councillor Ferguson
- Ontario Cabinet, bureaucracy and opposition parties
- Federal Government
- Kitchener-Waterloo

The Hard Costs of Doing Nothing

- $1 billion dollars in committed provincial funding will go to another Ontario community
- 30 years and $38 million spent on planning will go down the drain
- $40 million that has been committed to future engineering and design work will be litigated over
- $300-$400 million in roads, sidewalks, water and sewer pipes, bridges
- $450 million in direct economic impact due to the funding itself (3,500 LRT construction jobs);
- Hundreds of millions, if not billions, in intensifying development and economic uplift, and the tax revenue that those increases generate in perpetuity

At least $2 billion

The Other Costs of Doing Nothing

- The damage inflicted on key city partners and stakeholders
- A city strategic plan and mission statement that aren’t worth the paper they’re printed on
- Further damage to our reputation
- The damage to our relationships with higher levels of government
- Years of progress in reshaping our image and regaining our confidence
- The enthusiasm of the thousands of people that have recently been attracted to Hamilton: The Ambitious City

Immeasurable
Economic Summit: Prosperity starts with a good quality of life

...fix your past mistakes with BIKE LANEs, RAPID TRANSIT, WIDER SIDEWALKs, and GREEN SPACES...

...add DENSITY, and include a wide variety of PEOPLE in envisioning the CITY'S FUTURE...

SET HIGH STANDARDS! BE BOLD!

COME BACK!
Sally Gunz

Co-Founder, Cedar Hills Community Group
Visualizing Density

- A pilot project to help understand density in the context of growth in existing communities
- Density calculator
- Complete community assessment tool
- Case study approach
Density & The Greater Golden Horseshoe

• Provincial land use planning + sustained population growth

• 12 million people need to live and work in the same land area currently occupied by 9 million people

• More density and more transit are essential
Changing Built Form & Mobility

• Industry and the housing market in the GGH are changing
• More townhouses, condo towers, and mid-rise apartments
• More focus on people, amenities, and active transportation
• More focus on complete communities connected by accessible, affordable transit
Questions About Density

• What does more density mean for the look and feel of local neighbourhoods?

• Does higher density mean overcrowding and congestion?

• Or can density be delivered in a subtle, incremental way through buildings that “fit” with the existing community?

• Can greenfield developments be built in a way that will lead to opportunities to grow into vibrant, inclusive, walkable, life-long, connected communities?

• How does density and transit relate to affordability?
Methodology

• Selected 5 communities
• Calculated density at neighbourhood and block scale
• Used drone photography, Google Earth and GIS
• Created a complete community assessment tool
• Examined how different aspects of a complete community work with density to create desirable places to live and work

# of people + # of Jobs
______________________
hectares
Complete Communities Assessment Tool

- Density
- Walkability
- Amenities
- Diversity
- Transit
- Green & Open Spaces
- Design
Uptown Core, Oakville:

**Key Features:**

- Located in central Oakville, at major intersection of Trafalgar and Dundas
- Designated as a Growth Area by City of Oakville
- On-going development activity; mostly residential
- Combined density of 41 jobs + people/ha
Density

8,672 people
2,340 jobs
271 ha
32 people/ha
41 jobs + people/ha
**Uptown Core**

**BLOCK DENSITY**

412 people  
2.6 hectares  
158 people/ha

**BLOCK DENSITY**

163 people  
0.74 hectares  
220 people/ha
• Lots of community facilities within walking distance
• Short block sizes
• Large parking lots separate residential and commercial areas
• Many transit stops within walking distance
• Uptown Core Bus Terminal
• Connection to GO Transit, Sheridan College, Hospital and 407 GO Carpool
• Mix of housing types with
• Opportunity for growth
• Lots of amenities in big box plaza format
Density and Transit Oriented Development

• All the components of a complete community need to work with density and transit to create great places to live
• Transit needs density; density needs transit
• Need a mix of housing types; not all high rise
• All the components evolve over time
THANK YOU

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