REPORT

Planning and Development Council

Meeting Date: December 7, 2020

FROM:	Oakville Transit and Transportation and Engineering
DATE:	November 23, 2021
SUBJECT:	**Town of Oakville Transit Priority Projects**
LOCATION:	Town-wide
WARD:	Town-wide

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report titled *Town of Oakville Transit Priority Projects,* dated November 23, 2021, from Oakville Transit and the Transportation and Engineering Department be received.

2. That the following are endorsed as the Town of Oakville's priority transit initiatives:
    a. Transit Fleet Electrification
    b. Trafalgar Bus Rapid Transit
    c. Dundas Bus Rapid Transit
    d. Palermo Transit Terminal
    e. Midtown including Oakville GO modifications
    f. Regional Express Rail on the Lakeshore West line
    g. Enhanced and Expanded On Demand Transit Services

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- Vehicular congestion continues to grow in Oakville and throughout Halton Region having significant economic, environmental and personal impact on residents, businesses and their employees.
- Successful implementation of planned transit initiatives will play a key role in achieving the goals of the Town of Oakville and Halton Region Transportation Master Plans.

- COVID-19 has impacted the transportation system, including use of transit services, and these impacts will need to be considered in future studies.
- Integrated local service and rapid transit routes connected to a regional network are crucial to supporting future growth, creating a balanced community and resilient transportation system.
- It is important to confirm key transit projects for the Town to ensure appropriate resources are allocated and funding is secured.

BACKGROUND:

The town's urban structure was approved by Council in 2017 and forms part of *Livable Oakville*, the town's official plan. The town's urban structure:

- Protects natural heritage, open space and cultural heritage
- Maintains the character of residential areas, and
- Directs growth to an identified system of nodes and corridors.

This series of nodes and corridors are the focus of higher density mixed-use development which will include places to not only live, but also to work, shop, play, and relax.

Livable Oakville, including the town-wide urban structure, represents the town's growth management strategy. It works in conjunction with the Halton Region Official Plan to implement the Province's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan). The provincial Growth Plan is a regional growth management policy designed to accommodate future growth through intensification of existing urban areas.

Halton Region is currently reviewing its official plan to set out where and how to grow to the year 2051 in accordance with the Growth Plan. This work is based upon a regional urban structure of strategic growth nodes and corridors as well. Oakville's urban structure is a key component of the regional urban structure. Transit corridors, particularly higher-order transit corridors, form the foundational framework of this network.

The town's urban structure coordinates land use and infrastructure requirements and establishes a framework and policy context for decision making that provides certainty for the planning process. From a mobility perspective, the urban structure identifies how the nodes are, and are planned to be, connected to each other, supports movement by all modes, and identifies the corridors that will support higher-order transit.

Livable Oakville and the Transportation Master Plan work hand-in-hand to achieve the mobility objectives required to support the town's growth and development decisions.

Switching Gears - Oakville's Transportation Master Plan (TMP), was completed and approved by town Council in 2013. It provided the goals, objectives, guidance, projects and direction related to transportation and how people and goods move within the town. The TMP included an overall transportation mode split of 32% by 2031 (6% active transportation, 6% travel demand management, 20% transit). *Switching Gears* was based on the following opportunity statement:

> *The Town of Oakville needs a transportation system that will accommodate growth to 2031, incorporating the planning framework from the Livable Oakville Plan and the North Oakville Secondary Plans.*
> *An opportunity exists to plan a transportation system which:*
> - Is safe, efficient and accessible, with choices in mobility
> - Fosters the use and development of a sustainable transportation network
> - Provides a public transit system that can offer a real alternative to private automobile use, and
> - Provides a network of on- and off-road pedestrian and cycling facilities that allow the use of active transportation modes as an alternative to the automobile.

In the spring of 2016, the *Transportation Master Plan Review* (TMPR) was initiated to update *Switching Gears*. The primary purpose of the review was to support the pending update to the Development Charges (DC) By-law. It was determined that the review would proceed based on the opportunities identified in *Switching Gears*, with a focus on determining if any new road improvement projects were required to support expected growth, and a review of transit mode split targets.

Through the TMPR, it was determined that a more moderate approach to the transit component mode split targets was appropriate as an interim target. The recommended approach was to adjust the 2031 mode split targets, with the ultimate goal still being to reach the targets of *Switching Gears 2013* (possibly on an extended timeline) in 2041. The revised interim 2031 mode split targets were:

- 3% Transit within Oakville
- 9% Transit to/from Oakville
- 6% Active transportation
- 6% Transportation Demand Management
- 76% Automobile

A balanced transportation system that provides options for residents, employees and visitors to travel to, from and within Oakville is an important goal. Planning based on the financial capacity of the town to provide services is equally important.

The revised transportation mode split targets were set with both in mind. A comprehensive transportation master plan update will be undertaken in advance of the next full Development Charges By-law update.

As was presented to Council in November 2020, the town has also engaged a consultant to assist in the development of an *Urban Mobility and Transportation Strategy* (Urban Mobility Strategy). The Urban Mobility Strategy will explore and provide a comprehensive understanding of ways in which to marry transportation choices with the functionality of the town's urban structure – the designated growth areas in particular – and the manner in which to connect these. The objective of the urban mobility strategy is to identify the many facets involved in transportation planning and how these are integrated. It will then establish principles and implementation tools that will allow the municipality to adapt to societal changes yet continue to move people to destination areas within the municipality and to the broader transportation network. It will explore the current advances in urban mobility and transportation planning to create a multi-pronged approach for moving people and goods in and through Oakville. The Strategy will closely complement and integrate with the town's Urban Structure and will be a key input into future transportation master plans.

Staff anticipate returning to Council with a final Urban Mobility and Transportation Strategy in Q1 of 2022.

COMMENT:

As Oakville grows, so too will the number of trips that our residents make each day. Together with active transportation, the provision of a full range of transit service options is key to support future mobility of Oakville's residents, as well as those who work and play in Oakville. The following seven priority transit projects are fundamental to this vision and are described in this report:

- Transit Fleet Electrification
- Trafalgar Bus Rapid Transit
- Dundas Bus Rapid Transit
- Palermo Transit Terminal
- Midtown including Oakville GO modifications
- Regional Express Rail on the Lakeshore West line
- Enhanced and Expanded On Demand Transit Services

From on-demand transit services to Regional Express Rail, each plays an important role in facilitating a shift from private automobile use for short, medium and longer distance trips. As such, the Province, the Region, and the Town are advancing multiple projects to support this shift to increased transit use. The various initiatives at the Provincial, Region, Town levels are noted below.

Provincial Initiatives

Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) began work on the *Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Planning Study* (GGH Plan) in 2016, and the report is expected to be released later this year. The *Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Planning Study* will be a long range plan, identifying the 2051 Strategic Vision (infrastructure, service improvements and policies) and Near-Term Actions (actions underway and policies that are ready to implement). The proposed vision is for an interconnected transportation system that provides safe, seamless and accessible transportation options for everyone.

A Discussion Paper was been published in June 2021. “Getting people moving on a connected transit system” was identified as the first pillar of the plan’s vision and amongst the 7 interconnected goals, transit connectivity and transit supportive communities were identified.

407 Transitway

The 407 Transitway is a proposed exclusive, fully grade separated bus rapid transit corridor running parallel to the 407 ETR. It will extend over 150km from Burlington to Highway 35/115, with up to 50 stations. In 2020, MTO completed the *Transit Projects Assessment Process* (TPAP) for the section of the 407 Transitway from west of Brant Street in Burlington to west of Hurontario Street in Mississauga and Brampton.

Three stations were initially identified in Oakville at Bronte Road, Neyagawa Boulevard and Trafalgar Road, although only the stations at Bronte Road and at Trafalgar Road were carried forward in the final report. Staff continues to work with MTO staff on the importance of the Neyagawa station. The future allocation of population and employment growth to this area will be important considerations in the analysis of the benefits of a Neyagawa station. MTO staff have advised that they understand the important role that Neyagawa Boulevard plays as a critical north-south corridor, and that they will complete further technical analysis of ridership potential in this area using the updated 2051 employment and population growth numbers.

A timeline for proceeding to detailed design and construction of the 407 Transitway has not yet been announced.

Fare & Service Integration

The Fare and Service Integration (FSI) Provincial-Municipal Table consists of senior representatives from transit systems within the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) and the broader GO service area. The Table members work together to develop recommendations, guiding principles, and considerations for fare & service

integration design and in other areas identified by the members as necessary to improve transit and the rider experience in order to make significant progress. The Table is taking a phased approach to achieving its objectives with Phase 1 "Foundational Building Blocks" scheduled to be completed by year end. Phase 2 "Fare and Service Integration Approach" will build on the work of Phase 1, focusing on the implementation of the foundational action items and consideration of options for a longer-term fare integration. Phase 3 will focus on identifying and recommending potential governance strategies and is now scheduled to be completed by the end of 2022.

The Terms of Reference for the FSI table can be found in Appendix A. The FSI Table held its 5th meeting in October 2021 and had made significant progress on fare integration, achieving almost complete harmonization throughout the GTHA. The Province also agreed to provide funding for consulting service to complete a study to identify opportunities for more seamless travel across municipal boundaries in the west GTHA (Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton, Oakville, Hamilton & Mississauga). This work will occur over the next 3 to 6 months. Further, Metrolinx has identified 10 action items for the next 3-12 months related to service planning; coordination; concession alignment; bus service agreements, service improvements to priority areas; and sharing of the regional travel data tool with municipal transit agencies.

Grade Separations

Two road-rail grade separations are planned in Oakville as part of the Regional Express Rail initiative: at Burloak Drive and at Kerr Street. The Burloak grade separation is a joint initiative between Metrolinx, the Town of Oakville and the City of Burlington, and the Kerr grade separation is a joint initiative between Metrolinx and Oakville. Both projects will place the current at-grade rail crossings with grade separated crossings, improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and train traffic while also improving operations and efficiency for those modes. Construction, expected to begin in 2023, will be preceded by utility relocations in 2022 (with some pipeline relocations already underway).

Dundas BRT

Metrolinx completed an Initial Business Case for the Dundas BRT in 2020, and is now proceeding with a Preliminary Business Case. Business cases consider the strategic, economic, financial and deliverability/operations of a project to determine its viability and the case for investment. Town staff are participating on the technical advisory committee for this study. Public consultation is also a key component of the current Metrolinx study (https://www.metrolinxengage.com/en/engagement-initiatives/dundasbrt). Information specific to Halton is expected to be presented to the public in the first quarter of 2022.

The Dundas BRT will play an important role in supporting Oakville residents in making more trips by transit, within Oakville and from home to neighbouring communities for work or personal trips.

Halton Region Initiatives

Mobility Management Strategy for Halton (2017)

In 2017, Regional Council endorsed a "*Mobility Management Strategy for Halton*" outlining a strategy to guide the evolution of a region-wide inter/intra transportation network over the next 25 years. The strategy focused on the principle of "Mobility-as-a-Service", recognizing that mobility options are no longer clearly divided between automobile and transit, but rather, focus on a menu of travel options including sustainable and active transportation modes.

As part of the *Mobility Management Strategy*, a Region-wide grid network of approximately 156 km of key Transit Priority Corridors and approximately 36 km of Mobility Links was identified. This network builds on the strengths of the existing transportation networks in Halton (Provincial, Regional, Local) and supports the strategic integration of Major Transit Station Areas, while enhancing connectivity amongst the local municipal and inter/intra-regional transit networks. These corridors identified in the study build upon the Higher Order Transit Corridors identified in the Regional Official Plan and the *2011 Transportation Master Plan to 2031 – The Road to Change*. These corridors were identified to serve as key links to existing and planned destinations within and beyond Halton Region.

The proposed Transit Priority Corridors in, or partially within, Oakville are Bronte Road/Regional Road 25 from Bronte GO Station to Steeles Avenue; Dundas Street from Brant Street to Winston Churchill Boulevard; Harvester/Speers/Cornwall from Brant Street to Winston Churchill Boulevard; and Trafalgar Road from Oakville GO Station to Georgetown GO Station. The *Mobility Management Strategy* also included two Mobility Links which are corridors that would serve as local service/inter-municipal connections. One Mobility Link is partially located within Oakville – Neyagawa Boulevard/James Snow Parkway from Upper Middle Road to the Milton GO Station.

Defining Major Transit Requirements (DMTR) in Halton (2019)

Subsequent to the *Mobility Management Strategy*, Regional Council endorsed a report "*Defining Major Transit Requirements in Halton*" in 2019. This study delineated the 2031 and 2041 Preliminary Transit Priority Network, by defining the "Type", "Form", and "Function" of the Transit Priority Corridors as identified in the *Mobility Management Strategy*, in order to identify order-of-magnitude investment requirements for the Transit Priority Corridors that support inter/intra-regional connections and the potential growth of the Major Transit Station Areas.

As part of the DMTR Study, Preliminary 2031 and 2041 Recommended Transit Priority Corridor Networks were identified (Appendix B). The networks comprised of mixed traffic corridors, priority bus corridors (with transit priority measure such as transit signal priority and queue jump lanes) and bus rapid transit corridor (with dedicated transit lanes). Within Oakville, Dundas Street, Trafalgar Road, Bronte Road, and the Wyecroft/Speers/Cornwall corridor were identified as Transit Priority Corridors. The 2041 network recommendations include that Bus Rapid Transit could be warranted on Trafalgar Road (south of Highway 407) and on Dundas Street from Bronte Road easterly in 2041.

Operationalization of Transit Priority Corridor Network Study

In order to support a multi-modal transportation network and to identify options to operationalize the transit priority corridor network to 2031, the Region is undertaking a *Transit Operationalization Strategy*. The purpose of this study is as follows;

- develop Operationalization Alternatives for the potential evolution of the transit priority corridors in Halton Region, and
- define a preferred alternative for the delivery of the Preliminary 2031 Recommended Transit Priority Corridor Network, in collaboration with the local municipalities.

This study will develop and evaluate governance model alternatives as well as technology options. This will include investigation of potential governance structure, service delivery and operating models, and technology options.

Town of Oakville Transit Priorities

Transit Fleet Electrification

The town has been active in implementing climate change policies and programs since 2005 and has taken significant steps to reduce its impact on the environment. At its June 24, 2019 meeting, Council unanimously passed a motion declaring a climate emergency in Oakville. The declaration established the importance of accelerating climate change action and signals to the community the need to take action now. Given Council's strong commitment to reducing its impact on the environment, staff recommended utilizing available Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding to begin greening its transit fleet at an accelerated rate.

Oakville Transit buses travel more than six million kilometers annually. Diesel fuel is the single largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the town's operations. Transitioning to a zero emission propulsion system will have a significant positive impact on the town's corporate goal to reduce GHG emissions 80% by 2050 from 2014 levels. This transition not only supports Oakville Town Council's unanimous Climate Change Emergency declaration, but also the town's Environmental Sustainability Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Community Energy Plan and Sustainable Green Fleet Procedure.

In July 2021, Oakville Transit completed an *Electric Bus Needs Assessment & Rollout Pla*n to understand the current state of the transit facility and its power infrastructure, as well as operations and maintenance requirements relative to the needs of full fleet electrification. This roadmap to electrification noted that in order to charge a fleet of electric transit buses, the energy delivery infrastructure at the Wyecroft Transit Facility will require significant upgrade. In light of this, the next step toward fleet electrification involves securing supply, construction, and maintenance of the necessary energy infrastructure followed by procurement of battery electric buses for conventional, specialized and on-demand services. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) are being finalized to secure buses and services. However, it is also important for the town to develop a funding strategy for continued purchase of battery electric buses beyond the end of the ICIP funding window. The transition of the Oakville Transit fleet from diesel to electric is planned to be complete by 2036.

Trafalgar Bus Rapid Transit

The Livable Oakville Plan identifies the Trafalgar Road Corridor as a Special Study Area. Within Livable Oakville, on Schedule C: Transportation Plan, for the majority of the length of the corridor (Hwy 407 to Leighland Avenue) Trafalgar Road is also identified as a Transitway. Town of Oakville completed the *Trafalgar Road Corridor Planning Study* in 2014 that created a vision for change that fits within the neighbourhood context and integrates land use and urban design policies to guide balanced growth along the Corridor and support transit.

Metrolinx, adopted a Regional Transportation Plan called *The Big Move* in 2008, with an update in 2013. The plan identifies a multi-modal transportation system for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) that sets forth a number of initiatives in Halton. One of the initiatives is a rapid transit corridor along Trafalgar Road between Midtown Oakville and Highway 407.

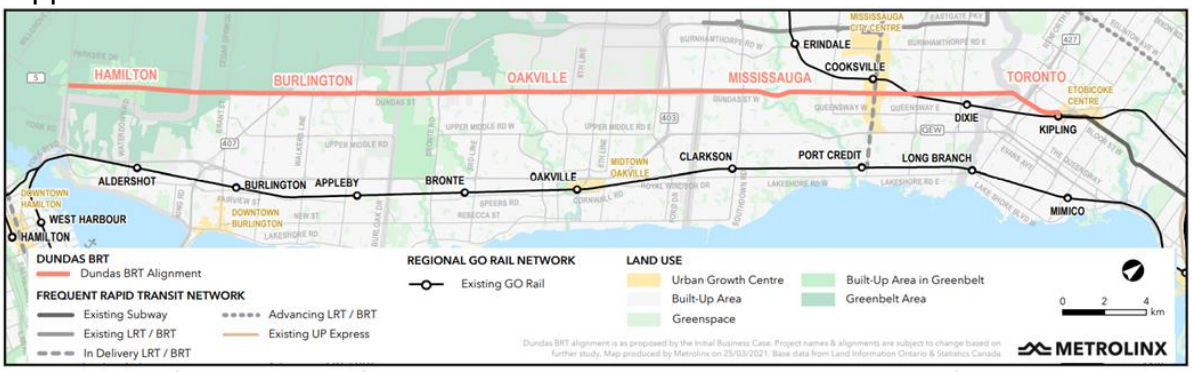
In Regional context, Trafalgar Road is identified as a Rapid Transit Corridor (BRT) in the Region's Official Plan (ROPA 38). An essential goal in the Region's Transportation Master Plan, *The Road to Change,* is to achieve a 20% transit modal split by 2031. The Region's TMP includes recommendations for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service on Trafalgar Road.

BRT is not an initiative that can simply be implemented overnight. The funding for operating and capital, the infrastructure, the branding and the building of demand will be an iterative process. Trafalgar Road has long been identified as a future BRT corridor and it is currently under construction from Leighland Avenue to north of Hays Boulevard by the Region. In conjunction with this construction, BRT type far side bus stop infrastructure is being added. In light of the Region's soon to be initiated *Operationalization of Transit Priority Corridor Network Study*, an important first step towards the BRT vision would be to open the new roadway with High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes as opposed to general traffic lanes. Aside from the

obvious environmental and roadway efficiency benefits, HOV lanes will also help to build demand for BRT services by making transit services through this corridor faster, more efficient, and more reliable. Future conversion an HOV lane to a reserved bus lane will meet with far less resistance that trying to convert a general traffic lane. The town should make every effort to lobby the Region to open the newly constructed lanes as HOV.

Dundas Bus Rapid Transit

Dundas BRT, a 48 km transit infrastructure between from Highway 6 (City of Hamilton) to Kipling Transit hub (City of Toronto), has been identified as Metrolinx's bigger picture for an integrated, multi-modal regional transportation system and supports Ontario's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.



The Halton and Hamilton section runs from the Ninth Line in the east to Highway 6 in the west. The BRT was identified as a priority for regional transportation expansion within Metrolinx's *2041 Regional Transportation Plan* and Halton Region's *Mobility Management Strategy*. Several Municipal Class Environmental Assessments have been completed in Halton and Hamilton for various road improvement projects that could potentially support the introduction of a shared high occupancy vehicle or bus-only lane.

Significant population growth is planned for areas north of the Dundas Corridor, an area which is currently underdeveloped. Demand for housing will be significant in North Oakville (north of the Dundas Corridor). Employment growth along the Dundas Corridor will be modest in comparison to population growth.

Town staff will continue to work with Metrolinx to bring a Bus Rapid Transit line to the Dundas corridor. However, as with any BRT, implementation is an iterative process. The roadway has already undergone reconstruction to increase the number of lanes and through that process, BRT type bus stop cut-outs where constructed. However the curb lanes where opened to general traffic. In order to continue to build towards eventual BRT along Dundas, the curb lanes should be converted to HOV at the earliest opportunity. This will facilitate improved transit efficiency and reliability leading to increased demand. The eventual conversion of

the curb lanes from general use to HOV will only become more problematic with each year that passes. The town should make every effort to lobby the Region to convert the curb lanes in both directions on Dundas to HOV at the earliest opportunity.

Palermo Transit Terminal

The lands surrounding the historic hamlet of Palermo are an important growth area within the town of Oakville, where new and improved local transit services will be introduced over the coming years. At the same time, the Dundas Street corridor is being planned by Metrolinx and Halton Region for major rapid transit investment. The Bronte Road corridor is also designated as a major transit route, thereby making the Bronte-Dundas intersection and surrounding area a key transit focal point. As a result, there will be a need not only for a convenient interface point between transit services but also to effectively serve the new residential, commercial, and employment developments that will occur in the coming years. In recognition of these facts and development trends, Oakville Transit identified the community of Palermo as a strategic location for a major transit hub, or terminal, in the vicinity of the Bronte-Dundas intersection. A key first step towards establishing a terminal is to identify the most suitable site.

An initial study to select a site was conducted in 2010 although no action was taken at the time due to delays in development of the area and transit service expansion. At that time, the study identified the northeast quadrant of Bronte Road and Dundas Street as the preferred location out of five candidate sites. That location was selected because of its strong performance against operational, land use, and implementation requirements and considerations.

Since 2010, there have been changes to the local development conditions along with changes in the local and regional transportation context. Given that the Palermo Terminal is expected to connect Oakville Transit services with other local and Regional transit operators, multiple local and regional transportation plans influence the terminal's design requirements, including *Oakville Transit's Five Year Service Plan* (2015), the *Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan* (2018), the Oakville *Transportation Master Plan* (2018) and planned electrification of the transit fleet. Additional terminal requirements from GO Transit, Burlington Transit, and Milton Transit are also to be considered.

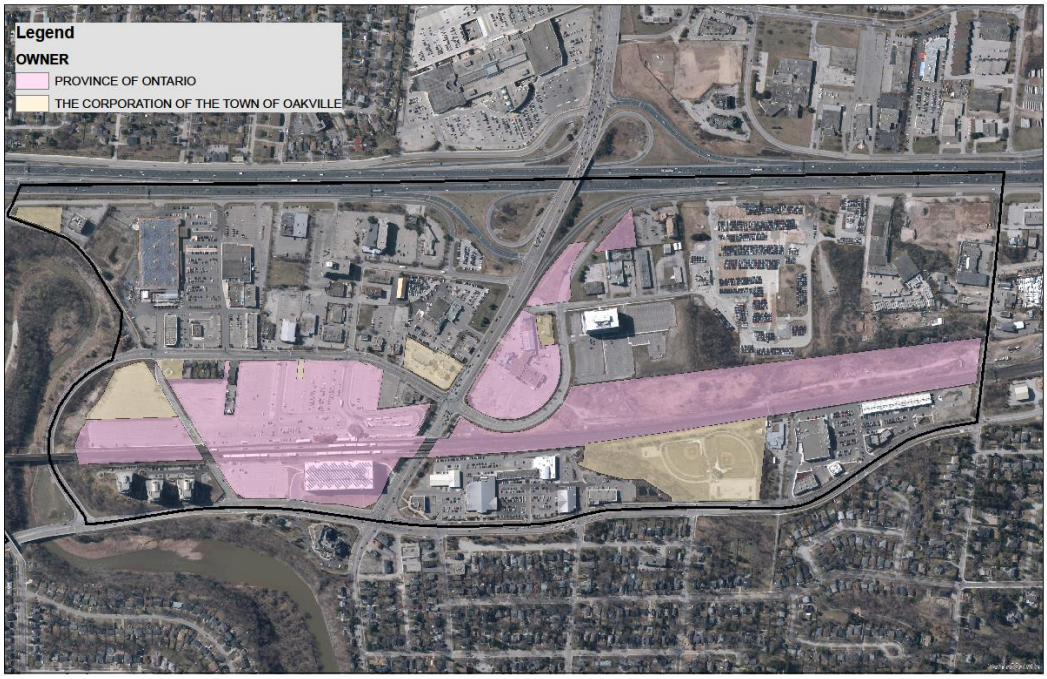
It is important to note that in addition to serving the Palermo area, the Palermo Terminal will also connect with future North Oakville bus routes and the new employment area being developed near Highway 407. Further, the terminal will act as a hub for future higher-order transit service along Bronte Road to the Lakeshore West GO line. The Palermo terminal cost estimate has been updated and $21.45 million has been allocated to the 2022 capital budget for land acquisition. A further $5.6 million has been assigned to the 10 year capital forecast in 2028/29 to

construct the facility. This amount will be further refined to ensure sufficient funds exist to accommodate the energy infrastructure required of an electric bus fleet.

Due to the changes in the area from development, it is important that we move quickly to secure the optimal site. Delay in land acquisition could result in the future terminal being located at an operationally inefficient location resulting in unnecessary additional operating costs and potential conflict with surrounding development.

Midtown including Oakville GO modifications

Midtown is the Town's Urban Growth Center (UGC), located south of the QEW, centred on Trafalgar Road, and covers an area of approximately 103 hectares (ha). 32.3 ha are publicly owned, with the Province owning 25.5 ha and the Town owning 6.8 ha. The land in Midtown is 30% publicly owned (45% if including the various road rights-of-way) as shown in graphic below.



Midtown has been planned to accommodate significant population and employment growth with a minimum density of 200 people and jobs combined per hectare (i.e. 20,600 people and jobs). Midtown employment lands will be home to over 8,000 jobs, and adjacent to a growing employment area. Midtown will deliver 23% of Oakville's planned intensification and almost 8% of Halton's future intensification between now and 2051.

Metrolinx's *The Big Move* identifies Midtown as an Anchor Hub – a Mobility Hub with strategic importance to potentially transform the regional urban structure and anchor

the regional transportation system, with connections to major transportation and transit connections including the Lakeshore West rail and future Regional Express Rail, the QEW, Dundas Street BRT, and Trafalgar Road BRT. Midtown will create a new GTA west hub astride the QEW, and anchor rapid transit in Oakville. Midtown will be developed as a transit supportive community and supports active modes of travel.

Midtown is currently well-served by Oakville Transit. The GO station is Oakville Transit's busiest hub, serving 17 of 22 routes, and the second busiest station on the entire GO network after Union Station. This station has all-day, two-way Lakeshore West GO train service, with connections to VIA Rail, GO buses, and Oakville Transit. It is the hub for "Home to Hub" service as well as a designated transfer location for specialized transit service.

There are also a number of future improvements coming to transit service in Midtown. This includes higher order transit facilities planned for Trafalgar, Speers and Cornwall, working with Metrolinx on improvements to the existing bus terminal at the GO station, as well as electrification of our transit fleet.

Given the importance of Midtown, and the Oakville GO Station as a major mobility hub, we cannot overstate the importance of future proofing the transit infrastructure as Midtown progresses. The station design needs to consider the full range of services that will be offered by Oakville Transit including but not limited to BRT, On Demand micro transit, specialized transit, and a significant number of local conventional routes. In addition, all transit infrastructure will need to include the energy infrastructure required of an electric bus fleet. Finally, Midtown itself will require a unique and environmentally sustainable transit solution to quickly and efficiently move people within the area.

Regional Express Rail (RER) on the Lakeshore West line

GO Rail Expansion will transform the transportation network in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area over the next decade. Metrolinx will transform the GO Transit rail network into a system that will deliver two-way, all-day service every 15 minutes over core segments of the GO Rail network, including the Lakeshore West Line. System-wide infrastructure upgrades will include: adding tracks, expanding stations, electrification of the rail network, new locomotives and train control systems to enable more frequent service.

There are obvious community, environmental and economic benefits to this Metrolinx initiative including reduced traffic congestion, fossil fuel reliance, greenhouse gases, fuel consumption, and customer travel time. The design and construction of the project infrastructure will generate employment opportunities and produce significant benefits for commuters.

In order to fully realize the benefits of Regional Express Rail, local transit service providers like Oakville Transit will be challenged to match the all day two way 15 minute frequency of the rail service. There will be little to no impact on customers using transit to travel to the rail service. However, the customer experience for trips back to Oakville will only be as good as the level of service being offered by the local provider. While many local routes operate at 15 minute frequency during peak periods, most routes only operate at 30 or 60 minute frequency in off peak. Transit users arriving in Oakville by GO rail service may be exposed to significant wait times for local service connections.

The benefits of RER cannot be fully realized without increasing service levels on the routes that service the GO Stations. This would involve expanding the hours of service and increasing frequency of service to facilitate efficient and reliable connectivity with the rail line.

Staff will also be initiating an Environmental Assessment for Chartwell Road. This study will be conducted collaboratively with Metrolinx. Chartwell Road is currently a 2 lane road with a level crossing at the rail tracks, but through previous studies, it has been envisioned to be widened to 4 lanes and serve as a gateway into Midtown from the south for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. The Chartwell EA will examine alternatives for the road cross section as well as for the grade separation of the road/rail crossing. The evaluation of alternatives to improve the road/rail crossing will also examine the benefits to travel times and safety for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and rail traffic.

On Demand Transit Services

Oakville Transit already delivers On Demand Transit in two forms. The first is its specialized transit service, branded as care-A-van. This service is provided to residents who are determined to be eligible based on a disability that prevents their use of conventional accessible fixed route service. Customers can book a ride using the On Demand self-serve booking service for any time during Oakville Transit's hours of operation and receive a "door to door" trip. Trip requests can be booked by phone, online or with the Amble mobile app.

The second form of On Demand service currently available is referred to as "Home to Hub". Customer eligibility for this service is based on their address and trips are provided from their residence to/from the nearest designated transit hub. This On Demand service leverages all of the resources utilized by our specialized transit and customers are comingled; care-A-van customers and Home to Hub customers travel on the same buses.

On Demand service is less expensive to deliver and provides an enhanced customer experience as it is more convenient, responsive and flexible. As On Demand service generally involves pick-up and drop off at a customer's residence, it

also provides improved security for customer travelling alone at night. All of these attributes make On Demand service ideal for a variety of applications including the following;

- early introduction of transit to newly developed communities
- replacing conventional fixed route service in off peak times
- making transit available to residents in areas with historically low demand
- use as “feeder service” for high frequency conventional service
- low cost “first-mile - last-mile” solutions
- providing an interim transit solution as part of a ridership recovery plan

Application of technology will be critical to our ability to expand use of On Demand services. It will allow customers to not only book their trip, but to manage that trip end to end. Enhanced technology also enables fully automated real-time trip scheduling. The customer’s trip request is automatically assigned to the most convenient available vehicle. The most appropriate vehicle type being dispatched in real-time where and when it is needed. However, the current practice of utilizing only specialized transit drivers and buses is not sustainable in the longer term without eventually having a negative impact on specialized transit customers. In addition, an expanded On Demand service will require full integration of all types of battery electric vehicle resources, including small buses, vans, sedans, and taxis.

Conclusion:

As Oakville continues to grow, a regionally integrated multi-modal transportation system that offers safe and efficient ways to move around the Town is critical. This report notes that all levels of government recognize the importance of a regional transit network that will support localized growth, business development and seamless travel around the GTHA. To ensure appropriate resources are allocated and funding is secured, staff recommended endorsement of the following seven priority transit projects as described in this report and shown in Appendix C:

- Transit Fleet Electrification
- Trafalgar Bus Rapid Transit
- Dundas Bus Rapid Transit
- Palermo Transit Terminal
- Midtown including Oakville GO modifications
- Regional Express Rail on the Lakeshore West line
- Enhanced and Expanded On Demand Transit Services

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

The posting of this report on the December 7, 2021 Planning and Development Committee agenda will serve as public notice of the report.

The public has had, or will continue to have, opportunities to provide input on each of the projects, initiatives and studies described in this report.

(B) FINANCIAL

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

The priority transit projects identified in this report are critical to meeting corporate goals related to mobility, urban structure, and climate action.

(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses all five of the corporate strategic goals.

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

Climate change is addressed through the Council approved transition of the Oakville Transit fleet from diesel to zero emission battery electric buses. The remaining five priority transit projects will result in greater use of transit by the residents of Oakville thereby further reducing GHG emissions from personal automobile use and vehicular congestion.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A - Fare and Service Integration Table Terms of Reference
Appendix B – **Halton Region -** Defining Major Transit Requirements (DMTR) - Transit Priority Mobility Networks
Appendix C – Town of Oakville Transit Priority Projects Map

Prepared by:

Barry Cole	Jill Stephen
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Submitted by:
Phoebe Fu
Commissioner, Community Infrastructure