



**BUILDING A STRONG
FOUNDATION**
HAMILTON
VISION 2020 • GRIDS GROWTH STRATEGY • OFFICIAL PLAN

HAMILTON TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN



VOLUME 1: CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

May 2007



and



in association with



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(UNDER SEPARATE COVER)**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Transportation Master Plan was completed as part of the Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS), along with the Water/Wastewater and Stormwater Master Plans. Exhibit ES.1 illustrates the interrelationship between these initiatives.

The overall purpose of the Transportation Master Plan is to develop policies and strategies for the transportation network over the next 30 years. This network includes roads, transit, cycling, walking facilities, and the City’s connections to rail, marine and aviation facilities. Results of the Transportation Master Plan will be used to develop new transportation and land use policies for the City’s Official Plan and the Development Charges By-law Review. It will also serve as a support document for the City’s capital budgeting.

The Transportation Master Plan has been developed in three major phases or stages. The first stage consisted of the calibration of the existing transportation model to reflect current transportation conditions in Hamilton. The second stage focused on the development of the underlying policies of the Transportation Master Plan, consisting of policies in 23 major subject areas. The third stage was the preparation of the master plan itself, which was developed in an iterative manner in conjunction with the land use scenarios, developed through the broader GRIDS study.

Exhibit ES.1: Inter-relationship between City Initiatives



The final recommendations for the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) reflect the Council endorsed “Nodes and Corridors” option as the preferred growth scenario for the City as approved by Council on May 24, 2006. This growth concept is based on directing growth to an interconnected system of nodes (central foci of community activity) and corridors (mixed use, transit friendly linkages).

Recommendations in the Transportation Master Plan are intended to move the City towards the achievement of the objectives of Vision 2020 and are reflective of the 9 Strategic Directions to guide development decisions that were identified as part of the GRIDS process, including Direction #6 - Expand transportation options that encourage travel by foot, bike and transit and enhance efficient inter-regional transportation connections.

Problem Statement

Between 2001 and 2031, Hamilton's population will increase by 162,000 people (32%). During the same period, 105,000 new jobs are expected to be created. If current travel characteristics remain the same, there will be 180,000 additional auto driver trips per day that will need to be accommodated by the road network. This translates into 1.2 million additional kilometres driven by Hamilton residents each day and a consumption of 40 million litres of fuel per year. Left unchecked, significant congestion on most Escarpment crossings will result in increased delays to auto drivers, transit riders and commercial vehicles. Accordingly, key objectives of the Transportation Master Plan include reducing dependence on single-occupant vehicles and promoting improved options for walking, cycling and transit, while maintaining and improving the efficiency of trips related to the movement of goods and servicing of employment areas.

A Vision for Transportation in Hamilton

In Stage 2 of the TMP development, a set of guiding principles was established focusing on 7 key objectives:

- Offer safe and convenient access for individuals to meet their daily needs
- Offer a choice of integrated travel modes, emphasizing active transportation (walking and cycling), public transit and carpooling
- Enhance the liveability of neighbourhoods and rural areas
- Encourage a more compact urban form, land use intensification and transit-supportive node and corridor development
- Protect the environment by minimizing impacts on air, water, land and natural resources
- Support local businesses and the community's economic development
- Operate efficiently and be affordable to the City and its citizens

These guiding principles and objectives were consistently referenced throughout the development of the Master Plan elements.

Over the course of the plan preparation, many individuals and stakeholders helped to formulate an overall Vision for the Plan. This Vision is anchored by the City's Vision for Sustainability – Vision 2020.

Plan Elements

In the initial stages of the Master Plan development, several broad strategies were examined in terms of their potential to address the City's transportation needs while respecting the principles of GRIDS and VISION 2020. These included the Status Quo Option (or Do Nothing), implementing 'Committed Projects' Only, Modest Transit Expansion, Aggressive Transit Expansion, Travel Demand Management (TDM), Roadway Capacity Optimization and Roadway Capacity Expansion. Although no single approach will address all transportation needs, the preferred overall strategy is to rely on transit and travel demand management, in combination with road capacity optimization to solve transportation problems, before looking to road expansion (including Escarpment crossings).

Accordingly, the Master Plan places a high emphasis on significantly improving transit services, providing options for cycling and walking and optimizing existing road capacity before considering major expansions. Also central to the plan is the need to improve transportation access to existing and future employment lands in order to support existing businesses and attract new ones.

Key elements of the plan are detailed in this report and include:

- Establishment of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network consisting of three primary spines and other interconnecting routes: A Lower City east-west corridor between McMaster University and Eastgate Square; a Central North-South Corridor on James Street and Upper James via Mohawk College; and, a Mountain East-West Corridor on the LINC or parallel facility. The staged implementation of BRT could begin with updating and enhancing the existing BLine, located on the lower City east-west corridor)
- Establishing other priority transit routes between major nodes.
- Construction of 120 km of new on-street bike lanes and over 140 km of new multi-use paths.
- A series of road improvements to reduce localized congestion and improve access to employment lands and new communities.
- Suggestions to expand the commuter rail and regional bus system to integrate with land use intensification policy objectives.

What will Hamilton's Transportation System look like in 20-30 years?

- *Businesses and industries will be prospering because they took advantage of the close proximity of Hamilton's Port, Airport, railway facilities and parkways to regional and international markets. Truck routes within the City will be well marked and receive priority for improvements*
- *Twice as many Hamiltonians will be using transit for daily trips because they can get across the City using a network of Bus Rapid Transit routes and express buses that offer travel times and comfort that parallel the automobile*
- *Commuters will be able to travel between Hamilton and surrounding areas such as Niagara and Waterloo via new GO Rail lines and bus services*
- *Cyclists will become a common sight given the 120 km of new on-street bike lanes and over 140 km of new multi-use paths*
- *Pedestrians will feel comfortable walking on streets with wider and more accessible sidewalks and improved streetscapes*

- A potential incline railway near Wentworth Street, which can serve to reduce the barrier effect of the Escarpment for cyclists and pedestrians while potentially becoming a major tourist attraction for the City.
- Continued improvement of the road system to address existing capacity issues and to ensure access for existing and new employment areas.

Financial Impacts

Appendix A provides a detailed listing of the estimated capital costs and timing of specific road and cycling infrastructure improvements identified in the Transportation Master Plan.

The table below provides an estimate of the order-of-magnitude annual capital investments by mode to implement the Transportation Master Plan. Further details on the costs by each mode are provided in Section 7 and 8. It should be recognized that these figures represent desirable targets and, when combined, are significantly greater than the current capital spending.

The majority of transit capital costs are related to fleet replacement and expansion, which are not location specific. Other transit capital costs include terminal upgrades and fare collection equipment. The initial phases of the Bus Rapid Transit system could be implemented without major infrastructure investments (i.e. separate bus lanes). Additional design studies will be required to determine the cost and feasibility of more aggressive Bus Rapid Transit treatments on a corridor specific basis. It is expected that funding assistance will be required from senior levels of government to fully achieve the Vision for Bus Rapid Transit. The Provincial Gas Tax (currently \$12 million) is an example of such funding.

Roads improvement and projects identified in the TMP are estimated to require approximately \$418 million over the next 25 years. Thus the total investment into the City's roadway network would increase by an average of \$16.7 million per year. The majority of these costs would be growth related and hence covered by development charges. In addition, significant investment in roads is required to address a backlog of maintenance and rehabilitation, which will place additional demands on the roads budget. It is estimated that capital investment should be at least \$60 million annually to maintain a sustainable funding level for road improvements and road rehabilitation.

Allocation of costs by project and year, and the development of long term funding strategy, will be developed as part of the City's on-going budgeting process.

Exhibit ES.2: Summary of Average Annual Capital Costs

	Current Trends (\$ millions)	Projected Requirements (\$ millions)
Active Transportation	0.5	3.0
Transit	12	20
Roads ⁽¹⁾	42	60-100

⁽¹⁾ Total road costs including reconstruction, widenings, traffic operations, rehabilitation and structures

In addition to capital costs, increases in operating costs are required, particularly for transit. To achieve the goals and targets for the transit system, it is projected that transit operating costs will need to approximately double. Increases are required for both the conventional transit system as

well as the Accessible Transit System. As the population ages, considerable demands will be placed on the Accessible Transit System.

Implementation and Monitoring

The process for implementing the TMP and its recommended actions requires continuous effort on the part of City staff, key stakeholders and the public. The adoption of the TMP is the first step in the overall implementation process. Following this, policies and recommendations on infrastructure will be carried through to annual *programming* exercises including the annual budgeting process wherein investment priorities and timings are established. The *planning* and *design* phase for future infrastructure begins once priorities are set, and follows the Municipal Class EA process. Physical implementation occurs with *construction*, and continues into the *operation* and *maintenance* of the facilities. *Monitoring* is undertaken to gauge the effectiveness of the policies, programs and infrastructure improvements in achieving the TMP goals and objectives. Shifts in underlying assumptions or achievement of objectives signal the need for a review of the basic policy direction, and the process starts again.

A regular review of the TMP is proposed every five years, ideally in conjunction with updates to the Official Plan.

Short Term Actions

The City of Hamilton is already moving on the recommendations of the Transportation Master Plan. Sample actions planned for 2007/2008 include:

- Replacing aging buses on the BLine express route with new environmentally friendly hybrid buses and extending hours of operation;
- Initiating a study to review truck routes;
- Increasing transit service within the West Hamilton Innovation District
- Working with the goods movement industry through the recently established Southern Ontario Gateway Council;
- Constructing new bike facilities on York Boulevard, Hunter Street and other routes and embarking on an update to Shifting Gears, the City's cycling plan;
- Continuing to implement streetscape improvements; and,
- Expanding the number of employers signing on to the Smart Commute Initiative.

These short-term actions are considered essential for ensuring that the TMP becomes a living document to which the general public can relate.

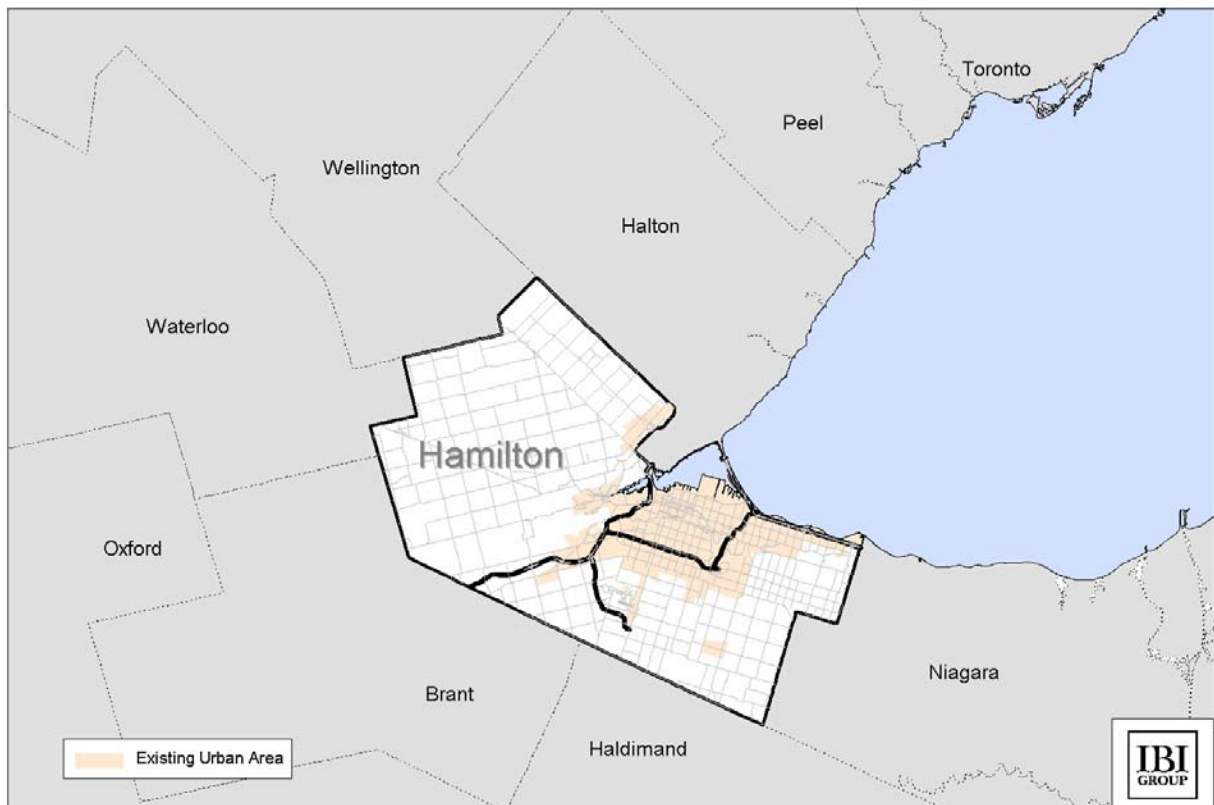
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Transportation Master Plan

The City of Hamilton is located in the heart of the Greater Golden Horseshoe at the western end of Lake Ontario (Exhibit 1.1). On January 1, 2001, the Towns of Ancaster, Dundas, and Flamborough, the Township of Glanbrook and the Cities of Hamilton and Stoney Creek were amalgamated and became the new City of Hamilton.

The City of Hamilton is home to some 505,000 people. Population has been growing by about 1 percent per year. By 2031, the City of Hamilton's population is expected to grow to 668,000, or by about 32%. There are many ways this growth could be accommodated, both in terms of location and in terms of servicing. One of the key objectives of this Transportation Master Plan is to ensure that future growth is accommodated in a socially responsible, economical and environmentally sustainable manner.

Exhibit 1.1: The City of Hamilton



The Transportation Master Plan is part of the GRIDS process (see Section 1.2). The overall purpose of the Transportation Master Plan is to develop policies and strategies for the transportation network over the next 30 years. This network includes roads, transit, cycling and walking facilities, and the City's connections to marine and aviation facilities. Results of the

Transportation Master Plan will be used during the City's Official Plan Review and the Development Charges By-law Review. It will also serve as a support document for the City's capital budgeting.

The Transportation Master Plan has been developed in three major stages¹ as follows:

Stage 1: The first stage, completed in 2003, consisted of the calibration of the existing transportation model to reflect current transportation conditions in Hamilton.

Stage 2: The second stage focused on the development of the underlying policies of the Transportation Master Plan, consisting of policies in 23 subject areas. These policy papers were approved by Council on November 24, 2004. The policy papers developed included:

1. Economic Development
2. Urban Structure and Land Use
3. Urban Design
4. Energy Use and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
5. Air Quality
6. Noise
7. Transportation Targets (including Transit)
8. Travel Demand Management
9. Walking and Cycling
10. Accessibility
11. Parking
12. Goods Movement
13. Traffic Calming
14. New Technology Initiatives
15. Access Management
16. Level of Service Standards
17. Road Classification
18. Rural Road Standards
19. Warrants
20. Provincial Highway Initiatives
21. Road Transfers
22. Financing and Infrastructure
23. Background Paper on Land Use and Travel Patterns

The policies and implementation strategies are centred around four key themes including *Promoting a Strong and Vibrant Economy, Building Liveable Communities, Providing a Balanced Transportation Network and Improving Public Transit*. A copy of the Final Phase 2 Summary of Policy Papers is included as part of the Technical Reports (separate document).

Stage 3: The third and final stage involved the preparation of the Class Environmental Assessment Master Plan for transportation infrastructure, referred to herein as the Transportation Master Plan (TMP). This phase was developed in an iterative manner together with the broader GRIDS study.

1.2 Growth Strategy

The Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy, or GRIDS, is a made-in-Hamilton smart growth strategy. The purpose of GRIDS is to identify the most ideal places for growth and the type

¹ Initially the three stages were referred to as Phases. To avoid confusion with the Environmental Assessment Process, the term "Stage" was subsequently adopted.

of growth based on environmental priorities, social issues, economic opportunities and population studies as well as to identify strategies to fund the servicing of these areas.

The GRIDS project, approved in May 2006, recommends a strategy to accommodate a projected population of 660,000 and 80,000 additional households by 2031. In keeping with the principles of Smart Growth, a minimum of 1000 hectares (2,500 acres) of additional employment lands are required to accommodate projected employment growth including 400 – 800 hectares of employment lands required to facilitate the development of the area around the Hamilton International Airport, as an economic growth node within the City of Hamilton and Golden Horseshoe area.

A further discussion of how the alternatives for GRIDS were evaluated in terms of Transportation Impacts is provided in Section 6.

1.3 Provincial Policy Framework

The Province of Ontario has recently undertaken several planning initiatives that focus on projected growth in the area of southern Ontario extending west from Toronto through Hamilton to the Region of Niagara commonly known as the Greater Golden Horseshoe. In its Growth Plan (Places to Grow) the Province outlines a strategy and identifies the necessary tools for managing growth in the fastest-growing region in Canada.

In the Provincial strategy, Downtown Hamilton is identified as a designated Urban Growth Centre, which has several planning implications, one of which is that it will serve as a regional transit hub with well-developed transit infrastructure (See Exhibit 1.2).

The Province has also adopted a Greenbelt Plan aimed at permanently protecting greenspace and containing urban sprawl in the Golden Horseshoe.

Exhibit 1.2: Places to Grow Concept



Source: Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 www.pir.gov.on.ca

1.4 Status of Plan Under the Environmental Assessment Process

The Hamilton Transportation Master Plan has been undertaken following the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act as outlined in the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment document (Municipal Engineers Association (MEA), June 2000).

The Master Plan approach recognizes that there are benefits to the process when comprehensive and integrated plans are undertaken for projects which have some common elements such as geography or function. As outlined in the Municipal Class EA document, the key features of a Master Plan are that it:

- addresses the key principles of successful environmental planning (see below);
- addresses at least the first two phases of the Municipal Class EA and can also cover other phases;
- allows for an integrated process with other planning initiatives;
- provides a strategic level assessment of various options to better address overall system needs and potential impacts and mitigation;

- is generally long term;
- takes a system-wide approach to planning which considers related infrastructure either geographically or by a particular function;
- recommends an infrastructure master plan which can be implemented through the completion of separate projects; and,
- includes a description of the specific projects.

This Master Plan follows a planning process that incorporated the following Environmental Assessment principles:

- consultation with affected parties early in the planning process so that decision making is cooperative;
- consideration of a reasonable range of alternatives;
- identification and consideration of the effects of each alternative on all aspects of the environment;
- systematic evaluation of advantages and disadvantages of identified alternatives to determine their net environmental effects; and,
- provision of clear and complete documentation of the planning process followed, to allow “traceability” of decision making with respect to the project.

The plan has also been developed in an integrated manner with the growth strategies discussed above.

The Master Plan was undertaken in accordance with Section A.2.7. *Master Plans* as defined in the Municipal Engineers Association, Municipal Class Environmental Assessment document (June 2000) and will satisfy Phases 1 and 2 of the planning and design process.

The Transportation Master Plan does not require approval under the Environmental Assessment Act, although the projects recommended by the Plan must fulfil all appropriate EA requirements. Requests for an order to comply with Part II of the Act, the portion of the legislation regarding appeals, is possible only for those projects that are subject to the Municipal Class EA, and not the Plan itself. All major road, transit and cycling improvements fall into this category.

If the period of time from filing of the Notice of Completion of the Plan to commencement of construction exceeds five years, the City will need to review the planning process carried out in developing the Transportation Master Plan to ensure it remains relevant and valid. It is anticipated that the Plan will be reviewed and updated prior to the five-year period elapsing.

1.5 Consultation and Communication

At the outset of the Master Plan process, a Public Consultation Plan was developed. The activities that were undertaken as part of the process are described in the following sections and are considered critical and required under the Class EA Master Planning process.

At the onset of the project, the City developed a website (www.gridsmasterplans.com), where all project publications, presentation materials and other documentation has been made available to

the general public. Notices of upcoming Public Information Centres (PICs) and other project milestones were also posted on this website. For those without Internet access, the City also maintained a Contact List, and sent relevant project materials to all who had expressed interest in the process.

Full documentation of the consultation and communication program is contained in Volume 3 of this Report.

1.5.1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Over the course of the TMP development, numerous events were held to obtain public input on the preferred directions for City of Hamilton's Transportation Master Plan and subsequently the proposed TMP elements.

During Stage 2, several events were held with the public and representatives of the public (i.e. Council). A chronology of these events is as follows:

- Dec 2003 – Staff/Council Workshop
- Jan 2004 – 1st Public Open House
- Feb 2004 – Charrette with Stakeholders
- March 2004 - Council Workshop
- September 2004 – 2nd Public Open House
- November 2004 – Council adoption of policy papers

Public consultation continued through Stage 3 (Master Plans) with the following major events:

- June 2005 – Initial series of Public Open Houses (Master Plans)
- November 2005 – GRIDS Open Houses
- May 2006 – GRIDS Final Open House
- September 2006 – Final series of Public Open Houses (Master Plans)

1.5.2 STAKEHOLDER AND AGENCY CONSULTATION

In addition to formal public consultation events, a number of organizations were asked for their input on specific needs and issues including the Cycling Committee, Transit Users Group, Accessibility Committee, Transit Master Plan and Gas Tax Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Transportation Club, and others. Meetings were also held with the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

The preferred transportation strategy seeks to balance the needs and objectives of all stakeholders.

1.5.3 SUMMARY AND KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Response to these consultation events was very positive and a signal that residents of Hamilton are concerned about transportation issues. Perhaps the overwhelming theme that came from these

consultations is that transportation and land use are intrinsically linked. Urban form affects transportation demand and transportation systems affect urban form. There was a clear direction that the transportation system must provide choices for people – whether they want to walk, cycle, take transit or drive. Most people also recognized the need to become more sustainable in terms of reducing environmental impacts, improving economic efficiency, improving health and improving social interaction.

Specific feedback from various stakeholder groups and individuals of the public was received in response to the presentation of the preliminary proposed infrastructure plans. There was strong support for Bus Rapid Transit as well as a large interest in a proposal to investigate the potential for an incline railway facility.

1.6 Implementation and Interpretation of the Transportation Master Plan

The basic mechanisms for implementing the recommendations of the Transportation Master Plan are:

- The Official Plan, which provides the background policy framework and outlines where and how growth will occur;
- The City's long range financial plans and annual budgets, including the 10 year capital plan and Development Charges Studies;
- Other Transportation Master Plans that have been adopted, are in progress, or pending; and,
- Vision 2020, which tracks progress through the Annual Sustainability Indicators Report Card; and,
- Inclusion of policies and programs in Secondary Planning processes.

The TMP provides a framework that will guide the preparation of Secondary Plans for new growth areas, as well as major changes in existing built-up areas. Because the TMP is an over-arching City-wide document, many local details will require further study and analysis through these Secondary Planning processes.

The successful implementation of long-range plans requires ongoing efforts to monitor relevant external conditions, outputs (i.e. actions taken) or outcomes (i.e. things achieved). Hamilton must track progress toward its goals and objectives so that it can add, change or delete implementation strategies over time.

A detailed implementation strategy for the Transportation Master Plan, including funding, staging and performance monitoring, is outlined in Section 8 of this report.

1.7 Structure of the Transportation Master Plan

Volume 1: Main Report

This Transportation Master Plan is structured into 8 sections. The following sections are provided following this introduction:

- Section 2 summarizes guiding principles and the major themes embodied in supporting policies to the TMP.
- Section 3 provides a context for existing environmental conditions, including potential constraints.
- Section 4 summarizes the existing transportation system performance while Section 5 presents insights on future transportation system performance. Together, these sections are used to formulate the Problem and Opportunity Statement.
- Section 6 discusses the alternatives that were considered during the development of the Master Plan, an essential stage of the EA process.
- Section 7 describes the major elements of the Transportation Master Plan including improvements to public transit, road network, cycling and pedestrian and goods movement systems.
- Section 8 provides a detailed implementation strategy.

In addition to this report, two other supporting documents are provided under separate cover:

Volume 2: Technical Reports

Summary of Phase 2 Policy Papers

Higher Order Transit Strategy

Cycling Network Strategy

Pedestrian Network Strategy

Road Network Strategy

Volume 3: Public and Agency Consultation Reports

PIC Documentation

Public Consultation

Agency Consultation