

**Our Rapid Transit Initiative**

**Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee**  
**May 15, 2017**

# Our Recommendations

- a) that the King Street/Queens Avenue couplet system **BE APPROVED** as the preferred downtown east-west corridors;
- b) that the Richmond Street corridor **BE APPROVED** as the preferred northern corridor through the downtown;
- c) that an at-grade level crossing at the CP Railway with dedicated bus lanes **BE APPROVED** as the preferred cross section on the Richmond Street corridor at this time;
- d) that alternative methods to separate both automobile and transit vehicles from the railway in the downtown (for example, a tunnel or grade separation, etc.) **BE EVALUATED** for long term implementation, noting that this evaluation would be subject to a separate assessment and future business case for implementation;
- e) that the Bus Rapid Transit Network, with the above noted modifications **BE APPROVED** as the preferred alternative for the completion of the Rapid Transit Master Plan, as the basis for the updated Business Case and the undertaking of a Transit Project Assessment Process (as per Regulation 231/08); and
- f) that subject to the approval of c), the implementation of the Adelaide Street / CP railway grade separation **BE CONSIDERED** a necessary element of the rapid transit system and a request for funding under the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund Phase II program be advanced.

# The King/Queens Couplet

## What We're Recommending

- One rapid transit late westbound on King Street and one eastbound on Queens Avenue
- Parking/loading retained on the north side of King Street and the south side of Queens Avenue
- Two lanes remain available for vehicles on each street

## Why the Change?

- The King Street option was better from a transit perspective and didn't impact other approved or planned projects
  - Most impacts experienced by drivers and businesses
  - Challenges for access to Budweiser Gardens and Covent Garden Market
- Couplet provides a better balance between transit functionality, City projects and the impacts on traffic and business
  - Retains traffic capacity and some loading and parking
  - Addresses access issues for major venues
  - Reduces construction duration on King Street
  - Allows local service to share lanes and stops with rapid transit on both streets

# The King/Queens Couplet

## Additional Considerations

- Back to the River cannot be car-free as envisioned in the winning concept
  - We will work with LCF and other stakeholders to design a pedestrian-friendly space as that project unfolds
- The Queens Avenue cycle track cannot proceed as planned
  - A new east-west route through downtown is needed
  - Integration into the Dundas Place design is one possibility
- Transit functionality is impacted
  - Transit users will get on the bus at a different place than they got off the bus so wayfinding and local options will be important

# Richmond Street Versus Wharncliffe Road

## What We're Recommending

- The northern route remains on Richmond Street

## Why No Change?

- Serves the most transit trip generators and most existing and future population and employment, including Richmond Row / Oxford Street, Victoria Park, St. Joseph's Hospital, King's University College, Western University campus centre, and University Hospital
- Minimizes impacts to the Blackfriars/Petersville Heritage Conservation District
- Avoids traffic congestion at Wharncliffe Road and Oxford Street West;
- Avoids the floodplain and the restrictions on future development that are associated with it

## Additional Considerations

- The need to cross the CPR tracks remains a challenge
- The cross-campus route will need to be negotiated with Western University

# At-Grade Now and Holistic Long-Term Solutions

## What We're Recommending

- One dedicated rapid transit lane and one vehicle lane in each direction
- Additional turn lanes at key intersections to help with capacity
- No grade separation at the CPR tracks

## Why the Change?

- The tunnel was always a very difficult build that carried a great deal of risk and was anticipated to use a significant amount of the contingency

Estimated capital cost	\$90 million
<u>+ Contingency expected to be used (50% of capital)</u>	<u>\$45 million</u>
Total estimated expenditure	\$135 million

- We advanced more detailed design work from later phases and a new cost estimate was received on May 3

Estimated capital cost	\$170 million
<u>+ Contingency expected to be used (30% of capital)</u>	<u>\$50 million</u>
Total estimated expenditure	\$220 million

# At-Grade Now and Holistic Long-Term Solutions

## Why the Change?

- \$85 million more needed to build the tunnel and have an acceptable level of contingency for the rest of the project
- Adding those funds impacts the cost-benefit ratio
- Holistically addressing the road-rail conflicts downtown for all users could increase potential benefits to all road users

## Additional Considerations

- One lane of traffic in each direction would mean the need to add north-south vehicle capacity in the area
  - Wharncliffe Road improvements help, but the Adelaide Street underpass would also need to be advanced
- Impacts on transit reliability related to the train cannot be fully mitigated with operational changes
- Addressing downtown road-rail conflicts, including the potential for a tunnel or other alternatives, would address a significant concern for Londoners using all forms of transportation
  - A funding and work plan would be brought back to Council this fall

# What's Next?

- Option 1: Council approves the recommendations in this report
- Updated Rapid Transit Master Plan and Business Case and a public engagement plan for the TPAP would be prepared for the July 24<sup>th</sup> SPPC meeting and July 25<sup>th</sup> Council meeting
  - A project plan for the road-rail review would be developed and brought to Council in the Fall of 2017
- Option 2: Council confirms the originally recommended routes/tunnel tonight
- An additional \$85 million in funding is required
  - Updated Rapid Transit Master Plan and Business Case with the new costs and a public engagement plan for the TPAP would be prepared for the July 24<sup>th</sup> SPPC meeting and July 25<sup>th</sup> Council meeting
- Option 3: Council directs staff to conduct a comprehensive review of rapid transit throughout the city or revisits BRT overall
- A new project plan (including schedule, work plan and consultation plan) needs to be developed reflecting the magnitude of the directed change
  - A comprehensive review would be completed at the end of 2017
  - Bus relocation, Dundas Place, Queens Avenue cycle tracks, Back to the River and possibly other infrastructure projects along any new potential routes would be on hold subject to completion



## Closing Thoughts

- BRT remains important for London's future and the system can evolve as the City grows
- If the recommendations in this report are approved, the cost of BRT is \$440 million
  - The City's contribution remains unchanged at \$130 million
- A stronger public engagement approach is needed, on this project and other major initiatives
  - A communications and engagement plan will be brought to Council for subsequent stages of rapid transit
  - Lessons learned from rapid transit will be integrated in engagement planning for One River, Dundas Place and other projects

**Our Rapid Transit Initiative**

**Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee**  
**May 15, 2017**