

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON MAY 28, 2017
FROM:	KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER
SUBJECT:	HIGH SPEED RAIL

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental and Engineering Services and City Engineer, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the High Speed Rail initiative:

- a) the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to undertake a High Speed Rail Corridor Protection Study to evaluate the potential land use impacts, develop design considerations for City infrastructure and identify corridor lands to be protected; and,
- b) the Mayor **BE AUTHORIZED** to submit a letter to the Minister of Transportation requesting that the Province appoint a representative from the City of London to the Planning Advisory Board for High Speed Rail.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
--

- Civic Works Committee - June 19, 2012 - London 2030 Transportation Master Plan
- Civic Works Committee - October 4, 2016 – Southwest Ontario’s Public Transportation Opportunities
- Civic Works Committee – July 17, 2017 – High Speed Rail

COUNCIL’S 2015-2019 STRATEGIC PLAN

Municipal Council has recognized the importance of rapid transit, improved mobility and improving travel to other cities through better transportation connectivity specifically regional transit connections in its 2015-2019 - Strategic Plan for the City of London ([2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan](#)) as follows:

Strengthening Our Community

- Healthy, safe, and accessible city

Building a Sustainable City

- Robust infrastructure
- Convenient and connected mobility choices

Leading in Public Service

- Strong and healthy environment
- Beautiful places and spaces
- Responsible growth

Growing our Economy

- Local, regional, and global innovation
- Strategic, collaborative partnerships

- Collaborative, engaged leadership
- Excellent service delivery

BACKGROUND

High Speed Rail

On May 19th 2017, Premier Kathleen Wynne, Deb Matthews, Deputy Premier and MPP for London North Centre, and Steven Del Duca, Ontario's Minister of Transportation, met in London to announce that the province is moving ahead with preliminary design work for High Speed Rail (HSR) along the Toronto-Windsor corridor. Ontario would be the first province to undertake a transformational update to its rail technology to decrease commuter travel times and the project would support economic growth across Southwestern Ontario.

High speed rail will be an economic and transportation game-changer for the City of London and Southwestern Ontario. It will provide congestion relief along the provincial highway system, reduce air emissions, enhance roadway safety, promote the Southwestern and Central Ontario economy through better goods movement and provide commuters with the speed and comfort required to make non automobile travel, a sustainable, environmentally friendly and viable transportation mobility choice.

DISCUSSION

In 2015, the report from the Honourable David Collenette, Ontario's Special Advisor on HSR, provided an overview of project feasibility.

(<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/publications/high-speed-rail-in-ontario-final-report/>)

The report recommended a concept-level route and line speed that showed a positive performance and high potential to attract ridership. Further investigation, design, and analysis will follow as part of the environmental assessment (EA) process. The key characteristics to be developed and explored in the planning, design and EA stage are:

- An above ground HSR corridor that uses existing infrastructure where possible to drive down costs;
- Ability to serve long distance business/ leisure trips and commuter trips, particularly between Toronto, Pearson Airport, Guelph, Kitchener-Waterloo and London;
- Use of running speed of around 250 km/h as appropriate to provide the best value for money
- Central/downtown stations that are connected to rapid transit and local transport networks; and
- Delivering HSR service in two phases: 1) Toronto to London, 2) London to Windsor

In May of 2017, the feasibility study was released which concluded there was a business case for high speed rail along the Toronto-Windsor corridor (**Figure 1**) and that there are opportunities to engage the private sector in financing and delivering the project. (<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/publications/high-speed-rail-in-ontario-final-report/>)

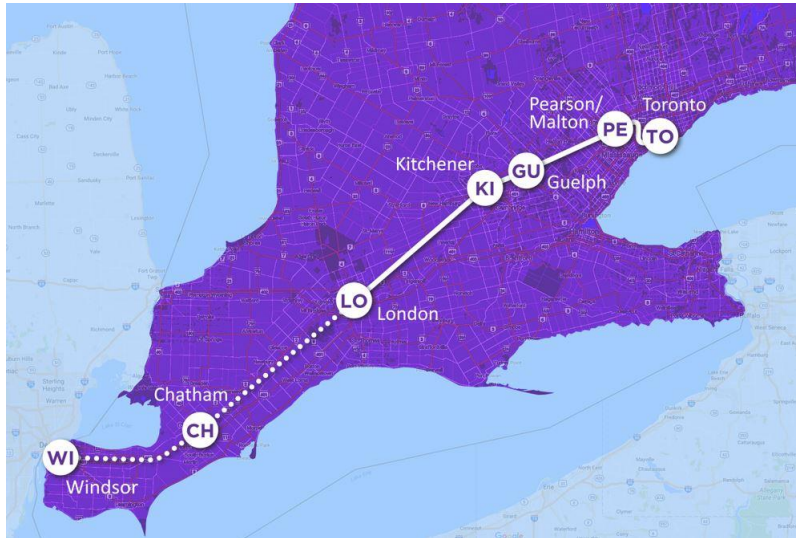


Figure 1 – HSR

High Speed Rail Terms of Reference

In February of 2018, the Province issued a Notice of Commencement for the High Speed Rail Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference (Appendix A).

The HSR study will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. The Ministry of Transportation is undertaking the planning, design, and environmental assessment approvals for High Speed Rail (HSR) for the Kitchener-Waterloo to London segment of the HSR corridor. The project will proceed as an Individual EA under the Ontario EA Act.

An Individual EA is a more involved process for large projects and requires a two-stage approval. First is the development and approval of an EA Terms of Reference (ToR). The second is the planning, preliminary design, and EA study. A ToR is subject to the requirements of the Ontario EA Act, and provides an approved plan/framework that must be followed during the subsequent Individual EA study.

The second stage of work (planning, preliminary design, and EA study) will further define the HSR segment from Kitchener-Waterloo to London in accordance with the plan/framework detailed in the approved ToR (e.g. HSR route location, station locations,

Project timeline



etc.). The ToR will provide a framework for meeting the requirements of both the Ontario EA Act and Canadian EA Act.

Further information is available at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/high-speed-rail#section-6>

High Speed Rail Corridor Protection

In July of 2017, Municipal Council approved the following recommendation related to High Speed Rail:

“That the implementation of a High Speed Rail link between Windsor and Toronto BE ENDORSED as a priority for the City of London; “

The importance of High Speed Rail, including the protection of transportation corridors, is addressed in many of the policies of The London Plan. The role of HSR as a key element of the City’s future transportation system was identified as a priority of Londoners through the ReThink London process (Policy 11).

Policies in the The London Plan highlight the importance of connecting London to the surrounding region. A listing of London Plan policies is included in Appendix B.

Both the City’s Official Plan policies and the policy statements of the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014* identify the importance of providing for and protecting the infrastructure and corridors necessary for High Speed Rail.

The London Plan identifies the High Speed Rail corridor along the CN mainline as a potential route and while the HSR Environmental Assessment is being undertaken, it is important to ensure that the City plans for and protects for its potential implementation.

The potential alignment for high speed rail is vulnerable to encroachment and development which could constrain or hinder its implementation. Early protection of the corridor will allow for an integration with land use policies and consideration in reviewing and approving development proposals.

The City is proposing to undertake a HSR Corridor Protection Study to ensure the HSR corridor is designed, buffered and/or separated from adjacent land uses to prevent or mitigate adverse effects from noise, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term viability of the HSR corridor.

The study would help inform the provincial HSR EA as well as ongoing City led initiatives along the corridor such as the Wharnccliffe/CN grade separation and the Wonderland Road Environmental Assessment.

Further to the Rail Rationalization report presented to the Civic Works Committee on May 28th 2018, the High Speed Rail Corridor Protection Study could also take into consideration the protection of railway right of way for a future consolidation of CP and CN.

In advance of the completion of this HSR Corridor Protection Study, the policies of both the City’s Official Plan and the PPS would provide a policy basis for the protection of the HSR corridor from both encroachment and incompatible development. Sensitive land uses are to be directed away from rail corridors, and sufficient rights-of-way must be retained to ensure the safe, effective and efficient movement of the HSR.

The key objective of the HSR Corridor Protection Study would be to review the feasibility of implementing/integrating HSR or a relocated CP railway line along the CN mainline and will include the following components:

- Evaluation of existing rail infrastructure and roadway infrastructure to accommodate future implementation;
- Environmental impacts and site remediation;
- Economic impacts of rail delays throughout the city;
- Impacts on existing and future development opportunities;
- Impact on emergency response and goods movement;
- Identification of lands along the corridor that would need to be protected for the future implementation; and
- Stakeholder consultation including civic departments and emergency services;

The project is anticipated to cost \$400,000. Approval from the Province will be sought to reallocate \$200,000 from Phase 1 of the Public Transit Infrastructure Funding (PTIF). The project is anticipated to be completed by mid 2019.

Consultation

The Ministry of Transportation High Speed Rail branch has consulted the City of London administration on a number of occasions, providing updates on the project status and met with staff to gain an understanding of the interactions with various City led projects such as Bus Rapid Transit and railway related initiatives.

The Ministry of Transportation will be engaging with stakeholders, municipalities and communities in the Toronto-Windsor corridor through a number of consultation opportunities throughout the planning, design and EA process in order to better understand the thoughts and views of community members and provide opportunities to learn more about high speed rail.

The Province has established a Planning Advisory Board that will provide focused strategic advice on high speed rail, engage with the private sector, build partnerships, and raise the profile of Ontario's high speed rail program. The members will serve on a part-time basis for a maximum three-year term. On February 13th 2018, the Honourable David Collenette was appointed as Chair of the Planning Advisory Board.

The board may consist of representation from a wide range of areas, including Indigenous communities, business, agricultural communities, high tech, engineering, environmental sciences, transportation planning, and financing and delivery of infrastructure projects. It will provide strategic advice on major business issues associated with the project.

On April 11th 2018, the City of London participated in a High Speed Rail advocacy day in partnership with the City of Kitchener, the Region of Waterloo, the University of Guelph and various private sector partners located along Phase 1 of the HSR corridor. The City of London delegation included Mayor Matt Brown, Councillor Jesse Helmer, and senior staff. Participants met with representatives from the Government of Ontario as well as representatives from the Progressive Conservative caucus and the NDP caucus with the goal of communicating the transformational effect that HSR will have on communities across Southwestern Ontario. Specific meetings included:

- Hon. Kathryn McGarry, Minister of Transportation; Jennifer Graham-Harkness, Executive Director of High Speed Rail
- MPP Catherine Fife (Kitchener–Waterloo); MPP Peggy Sattler (London West); MPP Wayne Gates (Niagara Falls)
- MPP Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka)

The Civic Administration will continue to engage with the Ministry of Transportation on a technical level.

As the province moves forward with the HSR initiative, it will be critical for London to remain actively engaged in the discussion and planning efforts. HSR has been identified as a priority for the City of London and given the significance of this initiative for London, it is recommended that the Province be requested to appoint a representative from the City to the Planning Advisory Board.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with input from Adam Thompson, Manager III, Government & External Relations and Greg Barrett, Manager, Long Range Planning and Research, Planning Services.

SUBMITTED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
EDWARD SOLDO, P.ENG. DIRECTOR, ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION	KELLY SCHERR, P.ENG., MBA, FEC MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER

Attach: Appendix "A" – Notice of Commencement – HSR EA Terms of Reference
Appendix "B" – The London Plan policies related to High Speed Rail

Appendix A – Notice of Commencement – HSR EA Terms of Reference

ONTARIO GOVERNMENT NOTICE Notice of Commencement of the High Speed Rail Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference

The Ontario **Ministry of Transportation (MTO)** has initiated an Environmental Assessment (EA) under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* for high speed rail (HSR) from Kitchener-Waterloo to London.

THE PROCESS

This study will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*. The first step of the process is the preparation of a Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference will set out the proponent's framework and work plan for addressing the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* requirements when preparing the environmental assessment, including such things as the alternatives that will be considered and the public consultation activities that will be carried out. If approved by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Terms of Reference will provide the framework and requirements for the preparation of the environmental assessment.

In May 2017, the Premier of Ontario announced that the province would be moving ahead with the planning, design, and EA work for HSR. MTO is embarking on a transformative program to deliver HSR to Ontario – the first for Canada and one of the largest infrastructure projects in Ontario. High speed rail cuts down on travel times, gives people more low-carbon transportation options, and creates new opportunities for workers and businesses.

CONSULTATION

Members of the public, agencies, Indigenous communities and other interested persons are encouraged to actively participate in the planning process by attending consultation opportunities or contacting staff directly with comments or questions. Consultation opportunities are planned throughout the planning process and will be advertised to the public and interested persons. A number of options will be used to advertise consultation opportunities such as, the project website (www.ontario.ca/highspeedrail), local newspapers and direct mail.

For further information on the proposed study, please visit our website at www.ontario.ca/highspeedrail or contact:

John Slobodzian
MTO Project Coordinator
2nd Floor, Garden City Tower
301 St. Paul Street, St. Catharines, ON L2R 7R4
tel: 905-704-2204
e-mail: john.slobodzian@ontario.ca

Nicole Zdero
MTO Policy Analyst
2nd Floor, Garden City Tower
301 St. Paul Street, St. Catharines, ON L2R 7R4
tel: 905-704-2213
e-mail: nicole.zdero@ontario.ca

All personal information included in a submission – such as name, address, telephone number and property location – is collected, maintained and disclosed by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change for the purpose of transparency and consultation. The information is collected under the authority of the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* or is collected and maintained for the purpose of creating a record that is available to the general public as described in s.37 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Personal information you submit will become part of a public record that is available to the general public unless you request that your personal information remain confidential. For more information, please contact the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change's Freedom of Information and Privacy Coordinator at 416-327-1434.



Appendix B - The London Plan policies related to High Speed Rail

Policy 56 in the Our Strategy Chapter of the Plan states:

56_ Direction #2 Connect London to the surrounding region

1. Connect London to important cities across Ontario and beyond through high speed rail.
2. Ensure there are strong mobility and communication linkages to regional municipalities.
3. Enhance connections with, and invest in, the Quebec-Windsor corridor to benefit London.

In the same Chapter, Policy 60 states:

60_ Direction #6 Place a new emphasis on creating attractive mobility choices

11. Plan for, and invest in, a strong network of transportation corridors that promote connection and mobility throughout the city and to the surrounding region and highways. Connect London to cities throughout Ontario and beyond through high speed rail.

The Mobility Framework of The London Plan establishes a high level plan for moving people, goods and services throughout our city, to the region and beyond. Under the heading Rail Network and Airport, Policies 103 to 105 state:

103_ Figure 8 illustrates our rail network – including freight, passenger, and future high speed rail – and our international airport in London. These are important connections to the surrounding region, the Quebec-Windsor Corridor, a variety of large cities across Canada and beyond.

104_ High speed rail will be planned, facilitated, and supported to connect London to other important cities in Ontario and beyond. Our high speed rail station will be located in our Downtown, which will support a thriving core and allow for a strong integration with the hub of our rapid transit system.

105_ London will continue to be served by a strong network of rail infrastructure that will service our employment lands.

In the Mobility Chapter of The London Plan, Mobility is defined in Policy 307 as:

307_ Mobility is the movement of people and goods through, and beyond, the city from one location to another in a safe, accessible, convenient, and affordable manner. Mobility, typically referred to as transportation, can be classified into five main types: walking, cycling, transit, movement with mobility devices, and motorized vehicle movement. Our fixed mobility infrastructure includes such things as streets, sidewalks, cycling lanes, rapid transit lanes and/or rails, stations, pathways, parking facilities, and the many physical features that are supplementary to, and supportive of, this infrastructure.

Additional policies of the Mobility Chapter Support the implementation of HSR as part of the City's future transportation system.

313_ Through the plans and actions we take to design and build our mobility infrastructure, we will:

1. Link our land use plans and our mobility infrastructure plans so that they are mutually supportive.
2. Support the efficient, safe and convenient movement of goods and services.
8. Support and effectively connect to future high speed rail that connects London to large centres across North America.

314_ The city's mobility network will be enhanced by connecting to rail service. It is a long-term goal to connect London to a high speed rail network that will link our city to the Windsor-Toronto corridor and the Chicago-New York corridor.

317_ The primary hub for international, inter-provincial, and inter-municipal connections by rail and bus will be directed to a central location within the Downtown.

318_ Regional transit will be pursued and the requisite infrastructure to support it will be established.

Specific High Speed Rail policies are also included within the Mobility Chapter.

320_ The City's rapid transit hub should coincide with the high speed rail station within Downtown London to make rapid transit connections to rail as convenient as possible.

321_ Commuter parking facilities may be established at the Transit Villages to allow for regional population to easily connect to the Downtown and high speed rail services.

322_ Public parking, showers, lockers and outdoor amenity areas should be provided in support of the high speed rail station.

323_ The high speed rail station will be well connected to the major destinations within the Downtown. These routes will offer a very high level of pedestrian amenity.

324_ Centrally located rail yards and facilities that could be utilized for high speed rail vehicle storage and maintenance over the long term will be protected, where practical and possible.

325_ Expected high speed rail corridors within the City will be protected from encroachment, pending the completion of the Province's plans for high speed rail route alignments.

Policies 324 and 325 specifically relate to the protection of HSR-related infrastructure and corridor protection.

Finally, the Downtown policies speak to the role of High Speed Rail in the Downtown.

796_ Our Downtown will be an exceptional neighbourhood unto itself - with housing, services, and amenities targeted to serve a wide spectrum of lifestyles such as

families, seniors, and young adults. The shared economy will thrive in our core, including such features as shared office and work space, as well as shared car and bicycle fleets. Our Downtown will be the most highly connected location in the entire city, being the hub for rapid transit, rail, high speed rail, and the multi-use pathway along the Thames River. Downtown will offer the city's premier pedestrian experience.

799_ We will realize our vision for Downtown by implementing the following in all the planning we do and the public works we undertake, we will:

18. Establish the Downtown as the hub of mobility in our city, serving as the city's primary station for rapid transit, regional bus, rail and any future high speed rail network.
19. Ensure that our city's major commuter rail connections are located in the Downtown.

Through the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014*, (PPS) the Province provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. All decisions that affect planning matters are "to be consistent with" the policy statements of the PPS.

The policies of Section 1.6.8 Transportation and Infrastructure Corridors state:

1.6.8.1 Planning authorities shall plan for and protect corridors and rights-of-way for *infrastructure*, including transportation, transit and electricity generation facilities and transmission systems to meet current and projected needs.

1.6.8.2 *Major goods movement facilities and corridors* shall be protected for the long term.

1.6.8.3 Planning authorities shall not permit *development* in *planned corridors* that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified.

New *development* proposed on *adjacent lands* to existing or *planned corridors* and transportation facilities should be compatible with, and supportive of, the long-term purposes of the corridor and should be designed to avoid, mitigate or minimize negative impacts on and from the corridor and transportation facilities.

1.6.8.4 The preservation and reuse of abandoned corridors for purposes that maintain the corridor's integrity and continuous linear characteristics should be encouraged, wherever feasible.

1.6.8.5 When planning for corridors and rights-of-way for significant transportation, electricity transmission, and *infrastructure* facilities, consideration will be given to the significant resources in Section 2: Wise Use and Management of Resources.

The policies of Section 1.6.9 Airports, Rail and Marine Facilities state:

1.6.9.1 Planning for land uses in the vicinity of *airports*, *rail facilities* and *marine facilities* shall be undertaken so that:

- a) their long-term operation and economic role is protected; and

b) *airports, rail facilities and marine facilities and sensitive land uses* are appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other, in accordance with policy 1.2.6.