

Date: July 8, 2020	Originator's files:
To: Mayor and Members of Council	
From: Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, Commissioner of Transportation and Works	Meeting date: July 22, 2020

Subject

Hurontario Light Trail Transit Project Update

Recommendation

That the report titled "Hurontario Light Rail Transit Project Update" dated July 8, 2020 from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works be received.

Report Highlights

- In October 2019, Infrastructure Ontario and Metrolinx awarded a contract to Mobilinx Hurontario General Partnership ("Mobilinx") for the Hurontario LRT (HuLRT). The contract requires Mobilinx to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the transit project for a 30-year term. Since contract award, the City of Mississauga has been working with Infrastructure Ontario, Metrolinx, Mobilinx, City of Brampton and Region of Peel on implementation of the project.
- City staff from several divisions have been and continue to review design submittal packages from Mobilinx to ensure compliance for city infrastructure. Major construction was initiated along the corridor in March 2020. Despite emergency measures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, construction was allowed to continue under provincial guidelines. The City has been working with Mobilinx to advance aspects of construction to capitalize on low vehicular traffic on Hurontario during the pandemic. Mobilinx has provided a high-level construction schedule and HuLRT is scheduled to be completed in fall 2024. To date, construction has resulted in minimal complaints.
- There was an intention to sign an Implementation Agreement with Metrolinx prior to contract award that would define the City's roles and responsibilities during the construction phase of this project. While negotiations continue on a more formal agreement, Metrolinx has provided interim letters of agreement to cover areas such as permitting, insurance and indemnity. These interim letters provide commitments in those key areas until such time as the full agreement has been completed. A completed agreement for Council consideration is expected to be completed by fall of this year.

Background

On April 21, 2015, the Ontario government announced a capital funding commitment for the light rail transit project. Metrolinx is managing the implementation of this project along with Infrastructure Ontario through their Alternative Financing and Procurement (AFP) model. This procurement model includes the design, build, finance, operations and maintenance of the light rail system for a 30-year concession period. Metrolinx established a project team and identified detailed scope and performance requirements for the project. Furthermore, Metrolinx identified that they would ultimately retain ownership and control of the project assets. The Cities of Mississauga and Brampton, and the Region of Peel, are active partners in HuLRT.

The previous update was provided to General Committee on June 26, 2019 through the report entitled, "Huronario Light Rail Transit Project Update and Negotiating Project Agreements with Metrolinx", dated June 10, 2019 from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works. The report outlined the development of the procurement documents for the HuLRT Project and the final scope changes to the project.

On October 21, 2019, Infrastructure Ontario and Metrolinx announced that Mobilinx, a consortium of local and international companies, was awarded a \$4.6 billion contract to design, build, finance, operate and maintain HuLRT through an open, fair and competitive procurement process that a third party fairness monitor oversaw. Mobilinx is responsible for constructing HuLRT on behalf of Metrolinx. It was also announced that Hurontario LRT would be completed by fall 2024.

While ongoing preparatory works to move utilities that began in 2017 under the direction of Metrolinx continued, construction by Mobilinx began in March 2020 with the removal of centre medians. When the HuLRT system begins operations, Mobilinx will be responsible for undertaking the operations and maintenance of the system and HuLRT infrastructure. The municipalities are expected to receive the farebox/advertising revenues and be responsible for funding the ongoing (30-year) operation and maintenance costs identified in the award. An Operations and Maintenance Agreement will be negotiated in the future and will be brought back to Council for endorsement.

This report is intended to provide a summary of major activities and flag impending decision areas that will need to be addressed.

Comments

Design and Construction Update

Design

Since contract award in October 2019, City staff have been working with Metrolinx, Mobilinx, City of Brampton and Region of Peel on a number of areas to advance the design and

construction of the Hurontario LRT. While the City's LRT Project Office is the primary conduit to the project, it has utilized the expertise of an extended team of individuals from several divisions in all departments to ensure the project is compliant for city infrastructure and is implemented in a timely manner.

With the AFP delivery model, this project provides unique opportunities and challenges for the design and construction. Unlike a traditional project, the AFP project is strictly required to follow unique processes and more importantly, timelines as established under the Project Agreement i.e. the agreement between Metrolinx, Infrastructure Ontario and Mobilinx. City staff completed training and became familiar with the AFP delivery model.

As the design review process began in October 2019, the Mississauga portion of the project was divided into 6 Work Zones for design purposes, covering 14 Construction Zones. The design submittal stages include: 30% (preliminary), 50% (development), 90% (development), and 100% (construction).

To date, close to 120 design packages have been reviewed by City staff. This includes the majority of the Mississauga section of the LRT at 30% and 50% design, and some packages more advanced at 90% level. Staff is reviewing for compliance with the Project Specific Output Specifications (PSOS) document, which is part of the Project Agreement and describes what the owner wants in the project. City staff participated in developing the city infrastructure scope contained within PSOS. As the design has ramped up, City staff have been busy with an extensive review of design deliverables involving multiple segments along the corridor and, at the same time, dealing with multiple permits for investigations and other construction works. Currently, the City has met its prescribed timelines, but there is continuous pressure given the increasing number of submissions.

Construction

Under Metrolinx's direction, coordination of preparatory works has been taking place on the corridor since 2017, mainly the relocation of utilities. In Mississauga, this process had a total of 37 planned early works construction projects, the majority of which were Enbridge gas relocation projects. To date, 34 projects have been completed with the remaining 3 projects currently under construction and to be completed this year.

Mobilinx started its construction in March 2020, around the time the province enacted emergency measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, under provincial guidelines, construction of transit projects was allowed to continue. Mobilinx created a Pandemic Response Plan for its office staff, site teams, and subcontractors. The Plan includes, but not limited to: daily health screening forms, site safety briefings, physical distancing, cleaning/disinfecting high touch points, site signage and reminders, and preparations for emergency shutdown.

To date, Mobilinx has submitted for Mississauga more than 42 permit applications. Of those, 38 permits have been for investigative permits, 2 permits have been for construction permits and 2 permits for laydown area access road occupancy permits. City staff have continued to process all permit applications within the prescribed timelines and have been able to support the advancement of components of the construction schedule.

The primary phase of Mobilinx's 2020 work includes preparation work, such as surveying, borehole drilling and utilities work along Hurontario. The most visible part of the construction includes median removals, such as the removal of shrubs and vegetation, and structures. Median areas are then paved flush with the roadway and marked to manage future two-way traffic and to ensure pedestrian and vehicle safety. Sidewalks access will be maintained where possible. In some locations, sidewalks will be temporary asphalt until the permanent infrastructure is completed by Mobilinx.

The decrease in vehicular traffic on Hurontario has enabled crews to advance its median removal process and City staff are working with Mobilinx to advance other aspects of construction where appropriate. Mobilinx has completed its first section of median removal from Matheson to Highway 407 except for an area around Highway 401 interchange.

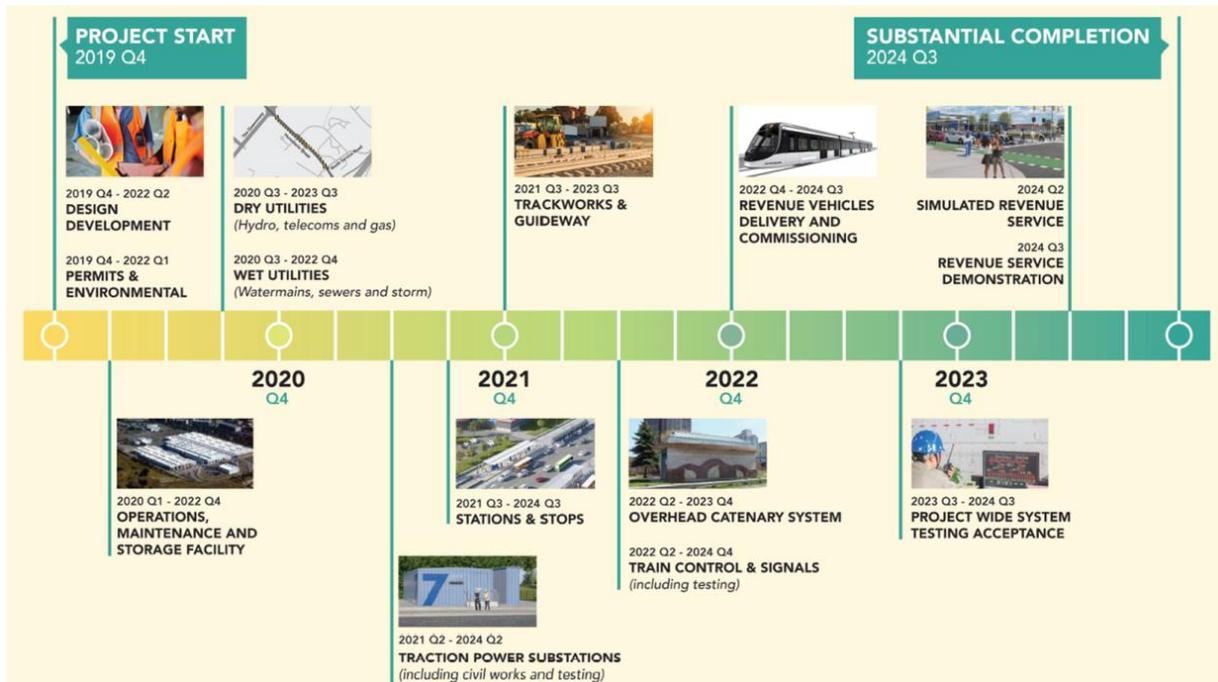
Mobilinx is currently working on the section between Dundas to Matheson. This section included the removal of trees in the centre median by the contractor to make way for future tracks. City staff explored options to transplant the trees. In 2018, a pilot project to transplant seven oaks was conducted to gather information for future decisions. While the trees survived the move, City staff found that they suffered considerable "transplant shock" and lost a significant portion of their limbs. Based on the conclusions from the pilot that the chances for the tree to flourish would be average coupled with the current financial climate, the decision was made for removal. Mobilinx developed an arborist report and associated tree inventory plans. As part of the Project Agreement, Mobilinx must follow the City's municipal standards as they pertain to tree assessments, protection, and replacements where trees will have to be removed to make way for required LRT infrastructure. Once median removals are completed this summer in this area, the final section south of Dundas is expected to be completed later this year, with utility works and roadwork initiating this fall as well.

Looking ahead to the late summer/fall, Mobilinx will begin the process of replacing of traffic signals on the road median islands, from poles to temporary signals on span wire and taking over the signal timing. This will take place one intersection at a time from Matheson north to Topflight and from Dundas to Matheson. Once the signals are replaced, Mobilinx will be managing signal timing and any complaints associated with the signals. This will allow construction crews to begin the process of utility, road and boulevards work, and the shifting of traffic. Prior to the start, City staff will review traffic management plans that will be implemented.

In Brampton, Mobilinx has initiated works at the future Operations Maintenance and Storage Facility (OMSF) just south of Highway 407. This included investigations, demolition, removal of

debris and fencing. In coming months, there will be more construction activity at this site, including the creation of a construction laydown area. The OMSF is scheduled to be completed by 2022.

Looking ahead, Mobilinx has provided a high-level construction schedule with key milestones.



To date, there have been minimal complaints about construction works through the City's LRT Project Office and 311, or through Metrolinx's community relations office.

Construction Laydown Areas

Mobilinx is considering up to 12 construction laydown areas and has identified one additional site to Metrolinx's committed lands.

Trees

As noted, trees have been removed in the centre medians to make way for future LRT infrastructure. During the construction phase of the LRT, a number of trees will be impacted along the corridor's right-of-way and the some will have to be removed to make way for infrastructure. The contractor is developing an arborist report and associated tree inventory plans to replace the trees, however, they may not be planted in the same areas.

Mobilinx is required to follow the City's municipal standards as they pertain to tree assessments, protection, and replacements where trees will have to be removed for required LRT infrastructure.

Transit Service

During the preparatory works phase of the project, as well as the construction phase, transit service has continued on the corridor. Some stops have been impacted by nearby construction where stops have closed or shifted. The LRT Project Office has been coordinating with MiWay with regards to these works so that stops are moved in a timely manner. All construction notices make note that works can impact transit services.

In April 2020, MiWay changed local service along the Hurontario corridor to minimize impacts to travel and deliver reliable service during LRT construction. The Route 19 was split into two separate routes: Route 2 between Port Credit GO Station and City Centre Transit Terminal, and Route 17 between City Centre Transit Terminal and Highway 407 Park and Ride. The Express 103 remains unchanged.

Implementation Agreement

It was the intention of Metrolinx, the Cities and Region to have Implementation Agreements in effect between each organization and Metrolinx ahead of contract award, as noted in the June 26, 2019 report to General Committee. But negotiations continued past financial close.

The Implementation Agreement would cover the construction phase and the assumption of construction responsibilities by Mobilinx. While negotiations continue on a more formal agreement, Metrolinx has provided interim letters of commitment to cover areas such as permitting, insurance and indemnity. These interim letters provide commitments in those key areas until such time as the full agreement has been completed. A completed agreement for Council consideration is expected to be completed by fall of this year.

Municipal Capital Contributions

In 2017, the City identified opportunities for Additional Municipal Infrastructure (AMI) and Corridor Enhancements (CE) as part of the HuLRT Project, which would be funded by municipal capital contributions. In 2018, Council approved AMI funding of \$26,307,000 for items that would benefit from the coordinated reconstruction of the corridor. The timing of some of these projects will be adjusted as a result of the change in scope of the project such as the removal of the Downtown Loop. Council also approved CE funding of \$26,607,400 to elevate elements of the base project scope being provided by Metrolinx. Some modifications are anticipated in the CE projects as a result of changes in scope. However, no change to funding is being recommended until all design and construction phases of the HuLRT project are complete.

Community Engagement and Communications

Metrolinx-led community outreach and communications continue to be a vital component to the project as it approached and entered the construction phase.

In 2019, there was:

- More than 14,000 conversations with members of the public
- Participation in more than 31 community events
- 31 information sessions hosted by the project team
- 64 “Transit in Your Community” presentations in 22 schools
- The official opening of two community offices on the corridor (the Mississauga office is located 3024 Hurontario, below the Cooksville Library)
- Approximately 5,000 visitors to a mockup of the Alstom light rail vehicle that will be used on Hurontario at Square One over the Labour Day long weekend in September

Prior to the pandemic measures, the HuLRT project team was planning for similar in-person engagement events and opportunities through the spring and summer months, all of which have been cancelled or postponed indefinitely. This will limit the number of interactions with the public. For example, there were approximately 500 participants at 4 open houses in Mississauga in November 2019. Metrolinx hosted a virtual open house in June-July 2020 to provide a project update. More than 4,200 unique users visited the digital engagement platform and posed 67 questions for the project team to answer. The most asked questions were related to the following subjects: signal priority for the LRT, potential Lakeshore extension, two-way operation and bike lane safety. The Mississauga community office saw a growing number of foot traffic visiting after officially opening in 2019, which was part of the decision to have it located in a pedestrian-friendly area of the corridor. Community relations staff have continued to address phone, email and social media questions. In-person Trade Shows that were meant to highlight Mississauga and Brampton businesses to Mobilinx in the spring will be replaced by virtual information on the Mobilinx website that will be publicized at a time appropriate to the recovery phase in the economy.

Corridor Committees, which were formed to provide information and context by Metrolinx and City staff, were adjusted. They became Construction Liaison Committees, but still represent the same areas: Mississauga South, Mississauga Cooksville, Mississauga Downtown and Mississauga North. Rather than meeting quarterly, they are now meeting bi-monthly, and may become monthly meetings as construction ramps up. It is not within the scope of the Committees to approve or refuse project design plans or to make policy decisions.

Metrolinx maintains a social media (@HurontarioLRT) presence, especially when informing of construction, as the public is notified of construction works, timing, and impacts. Construction notices are also mailed to areas within 500m of the construction zone and digitally to multi-unit landlords. Notices are also sent directly to affected Ward offices. Metrolinx also manages a monthly e-newsletter with the latest information about the project and news in Peel. Metrolinx previously had a dedicated Hurontario LRT e-newsletter. That information is combined with Metrolinx news in Peel as the organization shifted its communications by region rather than project.

As noted earlier, complaints about the project have been minimal. While Metrolinx is leading the communications, 311 and Ward offices do receive some inquiries. They are either routed to the LRT Project Office or Metrolinx community relations for response depending on the nature of the inquiry. Complaints should be directed to Metrolinx community relations (peel@metrolinx.com or 416-202-7500).

The City will be embarking on a branding exercise in conjunction with the City of Brampton to develop the name, logo and branding and marketing strategies ahead of the launch of Hurontario LRT. It is expected to be a multi-phased process, and the project teams of both Cities will be bringing an option for approval by Council in the future.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts resulting from the recommendations in this report. Although some scope and timing changes are anticipated in both the Additional Municipal Infrastructure and Corridor Enhancement projects, funding is being maintained in these projects until all design and construction phases of the HuLRT project are complete.

Conclusion

After more than a decade of planning, the landscape of one of Mississauga's busiest and most important corridors is continuing its transformation. With major construction started, Hurontario, the public and businesses will be facing several challenges over the next four years through the construction phase, notwithstanding the current pandemic. Keeping Council and the public apprised of developments on the corridor will continue to be paramount.

While the City is a key partner in the project, the City's LRT Project Office has developed a good working relationship with Mobilinx as it embarked on its contract to design, build, finance, operate and maintain Hurontario LRT. The City continues to work well with Metrolinx, the owner of the project.

Reaching agreement with Metrolinx and getting Council endorsement on an Implementation Agreement on the construction phase this fall will be an important step in the project.



Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, Commissioner of Transportation and Works

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