

To: Metrolinx Board of Directors
From: Leslie Woo
Vice President, *Policy and Planning*
Date: February 18th, 2011
Re: Mobility Hub Guidelines

RECOMMENDATION

Be it resolved

THAT subject to minor housekeeping and final formatting of content and document design, the Board approve the Mobility Hub Guidelines contained in a report dated February 18th 2011, prepared by the VP Policy and Planning (the "Report");

THAT staff make the Mobility Hub Guidelines available publicly;

THAT staff proceed to advance the implementation of the Mobility Hub Guidelines through the Next Steps contained in the Report; and

THAT staff be authorized to regularly update the Mobility Hub Guidelines at least every five years in response to policy changes or new tools and information becoming available.

1.0 Background

An efficient, effective, and attractive transit system depends on supportive land uses around its stations. Focusing growth and development around major transit stations allows more people to live near transit services and makes more destinations accessible by transit. Transit stations are also the key point of contact between the traveller and the transit system, so they have a significant impact on the overall customer experience.

The Big Move, Metrolinx's 25-year Regional Transportation Plan, imagines a future in which key transit stations become Mobility Hubs. A transformative action of the Big Move (Big Move #7) is to create a system of connected Mobility Hubs. Mobility Hubs consist of major transit stations and the surrounding areas¹ with significant levels of existing or planned transit service and a concentration of land uses and/or high

¹ The Mobility Hub boundary is roughly defined by the 10 minute walking radius, or 800 metres, around the major transit station. The actual hub boundary should be determined based on the specific physical characteristics, neighbourhood context, and planning framework of each site.

development potential. They serve a critical function in the regional transportation system as the origin, destination, or transfer point for a significant portion of trips. They are places of connectivity where different modes of transportation – from walking to riding transit – come together seamlessly, and where there is a concentration of working, living, shopping, and/or playing. The Big Move identifies 51 Mobility Hubs, 26 of which will include GO Transit facilities.

As part of the implementation of the Big Move, Metrolinx is engaged in a number of activities to advance Mobility Hubs across the GTHA:

- Leading planning, design, and implementation for key hubs, and leveraging Metrolinx investments to help achieve the hub concept;
- Partnering with municipalities, transit agencies, the province and private stakeholders for planning and implementation of specific Mobility Hubs;
- Providing advice and guidance to inform planning decisions at Mobility Hubs; and,
- Mobility Hub analysis and policy development.

To support these activities and help champion the development of successful Mobility Hubs, Metrolinx has developed Mobility Hub Guidelines to direct the planning and development of Mobility Hubs in the GTHA.

2.0 Purpose of the Mobility Hub Guidelines

The purpose of the Mobility Hub Guidelines (the Guidelines) is to:

- Clearly communicate the Mobility Hub concept;
- Provide guidance and innovative ideas on how to develop and plan Mobility Hubs, including incorporation into other planning activities (e.g., official plans, secondary plans, environmental assessments);
- Become a tool for Metrolinx, municipalities, transit agencies, developers, consultants, provincial ministries, community organizations, and other public agencies; and,
- Serve as a direction for Metrolinx when undertaking planning efforts, when building infrastructure in Mobility Hubs, or when reviewing third party plans and proposals for Mobility Hubs.

Even though the scale and context of the Guidelines is focused on Mobility Hubs, the document also contains strategies, best practices, examples, and resources that will assist with transit supportive planning for other major transit station areas.

The Mobility Hub Guidelines have no statutory authority; rather, they are guidelines to help implement existing policies and directions. The Guidelines are not a tool for identifying new Mobility Hubs.

3.0 Mobility Hub Guidelines Consultation Process

Metrolinx initiated a study to develop the Mobility Hub Guidelines and a multi-disciplinary consultant team was engaged in October 2009 to assist in the development of this document. The Guidelines were prepared with input from a wide range of stakeholders across the GTHA:

- An Internal Working Group made up of a cross-section of GO Transit, Metrolinx, and provincial staff was consulted throughout the development of the Guidelines.
- Several multi-stakeholder workshops helped to identify how to make the Guidelines most useful and useable. These workshops were attended by close to 200 professionals from municipalities, transit agencies, the province, and institutions in the areas of planning, transportation, transit, urban design, real estate, and economic development.
- Stakeholder meetings with key ministries and other groups (e.g., Metrolinx Accessibility Advisory Committee, Metrolinx Planning Leaders Forum) helped to refine the Guidelines.

4.0 Structure of the Mobility Hub Guidelines

Within a Mobility Hub there exists a natural tension between the *mobility* function - the need for quick and efficient movement – and the *placemaking* function – the elements that make the hub a desirable and interesting destination, rather than just a node to pass through. The ability of a Mobility Hub to function successfully depends on the interaction and balance of these two functions. Added to this, is the challenge of making it all happen.

Reflecting this, the Mobility Hub Guidelines are organized under the three categories of (1) Seamless Mobility, (2) Placemaking, and (3) Successful Implementation. Nine objectives follow under each of the topics as shown below. The Mobility Hub Guidelines are structured according to these categories and objectives, with specific guidelines, approaches, and best practices following under each objective.

Seamless Mobility

1. Seamless integration of modes at the rapid transit station
2. Safe and efficient movement of people with high levels of pedestrian priority
3. A well-designed transit station for a high quality user experience
4. Strategic parking management

Placemaking

5. A vibrant, mixed-use environment with higher land use intensity
6. An attractive public realm
7. A minimized ecological footprint

Successful Implementation

8. Effective partnerships and incentives for increased public and private investment
9. Flexible planning to accommodate growth and change

5.0 Comments Received from Municipalities and Other Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders, including provincial ministries, GTHA municipalities and transit agencies, and other institutions and public agencies, have provided input on the Mobility Hub Guidelines throughout the study process. We have received approximately 20 submissions and over 500 specific comments on the Draft Guidelines distributed in November 2010. These comments are greatly appreciated and have helped to enhance the clarity and content of the document.

Most of the comments received have generally been very supportive of the overall intent of the Guidelines. Several key issues were raised, including:

- The role of Metrolinx in the future planning, development and funding of Mobility Hubs;
- The role of the Mobility Hub Guidelines in the context of provincial and local policy and regulations;
- The opportunities to improve the content in regards to accessibility and providing for the mobility needs of people with disabilities; and,
- The need for clarification regarding the approach to identifying Mobility Hub boundaries and designating densities within such boundaries.

These key themes and how they have been addressed in the final document are discussed further in Appendix B.

6.0 Next Steps

6.1 Distribution, Education, and Outreach

Following minor housekeeping and final formatting of content and document design, Metrolinx will make the final Guidelines available to the public, municipalities, and other stakeholders in the GGH. A summary brochure introducing the document and outlining the content is under development and will also be provided.

Once the document has been disseminated, Metrolinx staff will follow up with communications and outreach activities and deliver presentations and workshops related to the Guidelines within Metrolinx/GO Transit and at municipalities and transit agencies across the region. A further step will be to convert the content of the Guidelines into web-based, searchable material that will be interactive and user friendly.

6.2 Metrolinx Use of the Guidelines

Moving forward, the Guidelines will be used within the organization:

- To establish objectives and the scope of work for Metrolinx-led hub and station planning and investments;
- To update GO station standards, plans and projects, to achieve the hub concept;
- As the basis for new standards, plans and projects for all Metrolinx investments; and
- As the basis for review of third party plans and proposals for Mobility Hubs and transit stations.

6.3 Updating the Guidelines

The Mobility Hub Guidelines will be updated at least every five years in response to policy changes or new tools and information becoming available. Developing a web-based version of the Guidelines will facilitate more regular updates.

Overall, releasing, publicizing and using the Mobility Hub Guidelines will help demonstrate Metrolinx's continued commitment to championing transit supportive growth and creating a system of connected Mobility Hubs as set out in The Big Move

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix A
Mobility Hub Guidelines

CD TO BE INCLUDED HERE

Appendix B

Summary of Submissions Received on the Draft Mobility Hub Guidelines

Key stakeholders provided input on Mobility Hub Guidelines throughout the study process. Numerous submissions have been received to date on the Draft released in November 2010. Most of the comments received have generally been very supportive of the document intent, but provide direction regarding clarifying and strengthening various sections.

Several key themes have emerged based on all the comments received from municipalities, transit authorities, and internally. These are summarized below along with how they are addressed in the Final Draft for Board Approval.

The Role of Metrolinx:

The majority of municipal submissions included a number of questions regarding the role of Metrolinx in the future planning, development and funding Mobility Hubs. Common questions included:

- What will be the role of Metrolinx and the Province in funding mobility hubs?
- Will funding be made available by Metrolinx for improvements to mobility hub transportation networks beyond transit infrastructure (i.e. sidewalks, roads, bike lanes, streetscaping, local transit)?
- Given Metrolinx's exemption from the municipal development approval process, what consultation protocol will Metrolinx use for the planning and delivery of new transit facilities?
- How will GO Transit incorporate the Mobility Hub Guidelines into the planning and design of their facilities?
- What will be the role of Metrolinx and the Province in assisting municipalities to protect lands required to achieve the mobility hub vision?

In response, staff has developed a comprehensive list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to address these concerns. The FAQs are available on the Metrolinx website along with the Mobility Hub Guidelines.

The Role of the Mobility Hub Guidelines:

The role of the Mobility Hub Guidelines in the context of provincial and local policy and regulations was also a common concern for stakeholders. In particular, stakeholders

asked that Metrolinx provide further clarification of the role of the Guidelines vis-à-vis the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and local Official Plans. The Ontario Growth Secretariat and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing have provided input throughout the development of the Guidelines. Additional clarifying language was added to the introductory sections I and II, in the discussion of the purpose and objectives of the document, and in a special section that describes the interaction between the Growth Plan and the Mobility Hub Guidelines. Further clarification was ensured throughout the document by introducing reiterating language that mirrors and references sections I and II.

Accessibility:

The GO and Metrolinx accessibility advisory committees, as well as other stakeholders provided valuable input in improving the Guidelines' content with regards to accessibility. Enhancements have been made, throughout the document to ensure that when speaking "all transportation modes" consideration is given to mobility devices for persons with disabilities. Further, a number of reference documents and best practices suggested by stakeholders have been added to our "Tools & Resources" sections to improve the quality and diversity of information available to the users of the document. Also of significance is the amendment to guideline 1.1 and addition of new approaches under such guideline to highlight the opportunity to make Mobility Hubs places for the integration of accessible and specialized transit services to facilitate local and inter-regional transfers for people with disabilities.

Mobility Hub Boundaries and Suggested Densities:

A number of stakeholders requested further clarification regarding the direction provided on identifying Mobility Hub boundaries and designating densities within such boundaries. The Draft Mobility Hub Guidelines identified an 800 meter radius around the major transit station as a general direction for the establishment of the Mobility Hub boundary. Generally, Mobility Hubs are also defined as areas for urban intensification. Direction was further provided on how this conceptual radius must be amended to reflect the local context in which a particular Mobility Hub is situated.

Stakeholders expressed the need for further clarification regarding the delimitation of the Mobility Hub boundary and the designation of densities that are appropriate and context-sensitive. Accordingly, the relevant content was amended, especially in section **II.II Defining the Mobility Hub Boundary**, and in **Objectives 5, 6 and 7**, to highlight the following:

- That while Mobility Hubs generally should be places of high land use intensity, the density level and its location must be consistent with (a) the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and (b) the local official plan, and that it should not negatively affect stable development, particularly stable residential neighbourhoods.

- That the Mobility Hub boundary must take into account the specifics of the local context and expressly identify areas fit for redevelopment as well as those stable areas that are not to be intensified.