Expansion Buses

Submission to Province of Ontario

April 30, 2019
A Transportation System for All

The projects identified in this submission represent the best opportunity to get London moving, now and into the future.

These are not just transit projects. They represent a city-wide transportation infrastructure opportunity that impacts all forms of mobility, makes commutes shorter and safer, relieves traffic congestion and builds better transit. All Londoners – including those who drive – will have an enhanced experience, thanks to the projects’ investments in intelligent traffic signals, road widening and streetscape improvements, plus dedicated bus lanes that help keep traffic moving smoothly.

These projects will stimulate economic development and growth. They will help connect people to jobs and establish clusters of industry in proximity to transit stations. Businesses and major institutions near the transit corridors can be expected to benefit from improved access to skilled workers and customers, increased productivity and competitiveness resulting from a reduction in travel times and transportation costs.

Importantly, these projects represent the will of the residents of London. They are supported by public consultation and are consistent with the sustainable transit and transportation goals outlined in the City’s Transportation Master Plan.

We believe these projects will provide the most benefit for the greatest number of people in the form of transit capacity, reliability, access and safety. Moreover, these projects will support overall improvements to the movement of all modes of travel, including vehicle traffic, and consequently directly stimulate urban revitalization, economic development and job creation.

The proposed projects will be an important step in transforming London’s transportation system, one that supports our economic growth and propels people and the economy forward. They represent a transformational initiative that creates local, regional, provincial and national economic and community benefits. They will help improve mobility, build strong communities and promote economic opportunity. Most importantly, they demonstrate London is open for business and open for jobs.
The Road to Here

How did we get here?

The City of London’s proposals in this submission package are the result of planning and consultation with Londoners, starting with the 2004 Transportation Master Plan.

The City of London has long prioritized transportation planning as a foundation of overall city-building and development. The need for rapid transit was first identified in 2004 and was reiterated in all major transportation planning strategies since then, including the 2006 London Transit Commission’s Ridership Growth Strategy, the 2013 Smart Moves 2030 Transportation Master Plan, the 2016 London Plan, and the 2017 Rapid Transit Master Plan. As a City, the projects included in this submission represent the natural culmination of years of planning and attention to London’s long-term transportation needs.

Our goal has always been to improve all modes of transportation, while addressing and shaping the city’s population growth and mobility needs. This proposal is designed to work with other planned improvements to make it easier for all Londoners to move around.

We have listened to Londoners, and they have spoken clearly: building better transportation for everyone means providing better transportation infrastructure for everyone, planned and implemented in an integrated way.

Population projections

London is expected to grow by 84,000 people in the next 20 years. Our employment base will grow by 43,000 jobs between 2015 and 2035. Between 60% and 70% of this growth could occur within 800 metres of the rapid transit corridors.

This growth will require millions of square feet of new commercial, institutional and industrial space as well as thousands of new residential units. It is estimated that when complete, the majority of London’s jobs will be within walking distance of the city’s transit network.

Ridership projections

London outperforms in transit ridership per capita, outpacing other municipalities implementing rapid transit systems, including Hamilton, Waterloo and York Region. In fact, London has the fifth busiest transit system in the province, trailing only Toronto, Ottawa, Metrolinx (Go Transit) and Mississauga.

Population and transit ridership in London are growing and are expected to continue to grow. Between 2006 and 2016, bus ridership grew by 20%, from 18.7 million to 22.6 million. Network ridership projections show a steady increase in demand for transit infrastructure.
Public and stakeholder consultation inputs

Consultation with Londoners has been ongoing for over a decade, through some of the city’s largest-ever public engagement exercises. By engaging tens of thousands of local residents, businesses, and First Nation communities these exercises laid the groundwork for a people-focused transportation network as part of the vision to meet our city’s unique transit needs.

The Road Ahead

Projects under consideration

We have worked with the provincial and federal government to develop a submission that responds to the desired goals of all governments under the Investing in Canada Plan. London’s 10 transportation projects approved by City Council were chosen from a short list of projects selected for consideration using the following two criteria:

1. Alignment with the federal program objectives, including:
   - at least one of improved capacity of public transit infrastructure, improved quality and/or safety of transit systems and improved access to public transit;
   - active transportation projects if they connect citizens to a public transit system;
   - projects that are consistent with a land-use or transportation plan or strategy.

2. Current degree of technical and financial analysis for each project to minimize risk with respect to cost estimates, project implementation and the City’s capital and operating budgets.

Following a Public Participation Meeting on March 20, 2019, Council identified and endorsed 10 projects to advance for provincial consideration. The first five projects have already been submitted to the Province of Ontario, and the remaining five projects are included in our current submission.
Top 10 recommended projects

The 10 selected projects included herein represent priority projects for the City of London that are ready to move forward immediately, providing the greatest benefit to Londoners.

The recommendation includes three rapid transit projects, combined with the efficiency of intelligent signalling and a long-overdue and resident-supported underpass project designed to improve mobility and transit connectivity. It also includes a range of other projects, such as new sidewalks and active transportation connections, designed to support transit in the city.

They are:

1. Downtown Loop
2. Wellington Gateway
3. East London Link
4. Intelligent Traffic Signals
5. Adelaide Street Underpass Active Transportation Connections
6. Expansion Buses
7. Bus stop Amenities
8. Dundas Place Thames Valley Parkway Active Transportation Connection
9. Dundas Street Old East Village Streetscape Improvements
10. Oxford Street / Wharncliffe Road Intersection Improvements

Why these 10?

It is important to note that each of these 10 projects has been evaluated individually and is able to stand on its own merits. Most importantly, these 10 projects present the best possible mix of transportation improvements within the current framework to get London moving forward, to provide the greatest short-term benefits to Londoners and all Ontarians, and to provide the foundations for ongoing transportation system improvements well into the future.

Investment in these high priority transit projects will improve road safety, smooth traffic patterns, decrease congestion, enhance connections to transit, improve reliability, drive investment and job growth and improve transportation – including opportunities for active transportation – for all Londoners.
Highlights of the project benefits include:

- Easing congestion and improving transit reliability and efficiency by separating buses from mixed traffic;
- Supporting greater access to transit services in London’s job-supporting industrial employment areas in association with planned frequency increases and enhancements to transit services;
- Upgrading intersection signals to improve traffic flow;
- Widening roads for lanes that can be flexible for future transportation needs;
- Coordinating construction with necessary upgrades to sewers, watermains, and utilities infrastructure;
- Adding sidewalks and facilities for active transportation; and,
- Improving overall safety for transit users and vehicle commuters alike.

Key benefits

Improving transit and access to transit

- The proposed projects will increase transit capacity. The result will be the ability to meet the expected growth in demand for transit services while maintaining the current vehicle capacity of the majority of roadways.
- Transit riders will have more choices and freedom because of improved frequency. They will have more reliable service because of dedicated lanes. They will have shorter waits at more comfortable rapid transit stations.

Improving vehicle travel

- Vehicle travel will be enhanced, with overall positive impacts on existing road networks, including much-needed infrastructure upgrades.
- By removing buses from mixed traffic, capacity for vehicles will increase while also increasing transit frequency and reliability.
**Improving opportunity**

- Combined, these projects are expected to generate 2,901 person-years of employment, representing $183.5 million in wages, during construction, plus an additional 167 person-years and $9.2 million in wages of long-term employment.

- Construction of separate rapid transit lanes, and accompanying efficiencies, are expected to result in savings of approximately 17.1 million person-hours of travel time by 2050.

- The increases in ridership due to the implementation of rapid transit will reduce congestion on our streets, linking goods to market and addressing the economic costs of traffic congestion.

- Projects will improve connections to London’s highest growth industrial and commercial areas, and to neighbouring communities alongside planned service frequency increases and enhancements to transit services.

- Enhancements to the health of Londoners through the incorporation of active transportation elements, improvements to air quality and overall reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

**Improving safety**

- Road upgrades will improve safety for all vehicles.

- Centre medians will improve safety of loading and unloading passengers.

- Expanding lighting at bus stops and adding covered bus shelters will make it safer and more comfortable to wait for the bus. Dedicated turn lanes at signalized intersections will improve vehicle safety.

- Critical response times will be reduced by allowing emergency service vehicles to use dedicated transit lanes.

**Quick facts**

- The projects will generate 2,901 person-years of employment, representing $183.5 million in wages, during construction, plus an additional 167 person-years ($9.2 million in wages) of long-term employment.

- Efficiencies gained will reduce the time Londoners spend commuting by 35.2 million person-hours by 2050.

- It is estimated that 60-70% of London’s future population growth will occur within 800 metres of rapid transit corridors throughout the city.

- The City of London has a large supply of vacant land close to proposed transit projects, including at least 43 parcels of land eligible for redevelopment with access to Wellington Road and Veterans Memorial Parkway.

- Travel in London, whether by transit or car, will be safer and more reliable.
Project
Description

Construction Summary

- Order buses on an annual basis, considering an appropriate mix of 40- and 60-foot buses
Every year, more Londoners rely on London Transit bus service to get them where they need to go – from work and home to child care, shopping centres and entertainment. And that increase is expected to continue. In the next six years, ridership is expected to increase by around 12 per cent to 26.7 million, as the city’s population grows and transit service expands.

To continue building better bus service for Londoners, the London Transit Commission’s Five-Year Plan recommends improving direct bus connections and increasing service frequencies. Expanding the City’s express bus route network is also a priority, along with exploring new and different ways to serve the city’s industrial employment areas to make it easier for Londoners to get to work.

To achieve these improvements that will benefit all Londoners, 22 new buses are needed by 2024. Beyond 2024, it is estimated that an additional nine buses will be required.
Eligibility Criteria

☑ Improved transit capacity
☑ Improved transit access

The strategic case

► In order to continue to grow transit ridership and connect more Londoners to work and play, improvements to existing service frequencies, connections and service areas are required.

► Significant numbers of Londoners travel to the City’s rapidly expanding commercial and industrial areas. Providing more travel options will help businesses and institutions attract and retain high-quality talent.

► As local bus service integrates with London’s planned rapid transit corridors, there will be more buses, more often, in more places – ensuring all Londoners can get to work, school and everywhere in between.

Benefits

Transit for tomorrow

► Investing in expansion buses will significantly improve transit service city-wide, increasing frequencies and connections and expanding service to new areas.

► Related service improvements will make it easier and more accessible for all Londoners to use public transit to reach local communities.

► Smart bus technology will enable buses to communicate with intelligent traffic signals.

Economic opportunity

► Improved transit frequency and expanded service areas will help more Londoners reach their jobs.

► Combined with plans for rapid transit in London – including the Wellington Gateway, East London Link and Downtown loop – businesses will be able to count on a connected workforce for decades to come.
Improving car travel

- Service improvements are designed to make public transit a more viable option for Londoners. Fewer cars on the road means less congestion for travellers by car, delivery operators and transit riders.
Accessibility

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