

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

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DATE	8 June 1998
TO/DEST.	Co-ordinator Transportation Committee
FROM/EXP.	Chair, Light Rail Pilot Project Steering Committee
SUBJECT/OBJET	LIGHT RAIL PILOT PROJECT: PROGRESS REPORT NO. 3

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Transportation Committee and Council receive this report for information.

INTRODUCTION

This is the third in a series of reports on behalf of the Light Rail Pilot Project Steering Committee, and summarizes progress made on the pilot project since Progress Report No. 2, dated 6 May 1998.

Note that Regional staff and consultants will make a presentation on progress to date and current key issues at the next Transportation Committee meeting on 17 June 1998. Committee members will have an opportunity to ask questions at that time.

It should be reiterated that current work will lead to a report to Transportation Committee in August 1998, containing recommendations on the pilot project's feasibility, scope, cost and timing, and on the procurement process that would be followed to implement it.

DISCUSSION

The Light Rail Pilot Project is proceeding according to schedule and budget. Recent progress is summarized in the following sub-sections.

Budget and Consultant Selection

On 13 May 1998, Regional Council approved the 1998 capital budget for the Light Rail Pilot Project, and on 27 May 1998 Council approved the selection of a consortium led by KPMG to provide the project with consulting services.

Project Team Meetings

The Steering Committee and Working Group each held two meetings during the month of May.

The Sounding Board held its second meeting on 19 May 1998, and continues to provide valuable input to the development of the consultation program and the identification of issues to be addressed by technical work. The third Sounding Board meeting will be held on the evening of 23 June 1998 at 7:30 p.m., and agenda items will include a summary of input obtained at the upcoming Community Forum, and a discussion of pending decisions related to the procurement process.

Public Consultation

A Community Forum on Light Rail will be held on the evening of 18 June 1998 at Ottawa-Carleton Centre. The purpose of the forum is to inform interested members of the public about the progress of the study, to present alternatives and their implications, and to obtain feedback about a number of key issues. The forum will include a number of workshops allowing attendees to focus on the issues that concern them most. It is planned that a concise "issues report" will be available to the public at and following the event; this report will contain information on ridership forecasts, right-of-way and vehicle procurement, and environmental assessment issues.

The Community Forum on Light Rail is being extensively promoted through varied means including:

- delivery of a letter and flyer to 41,000 households and businesses adjacent to the subject rail corridors;
- distribution of 50,000 "take-ones" on OC Transpo buses;
- placement of advertisements in daily newspapers and community newspapers throughout the region;
- provision of an article to community newspapers;
- delivery of a letter and flyer to all community associations in the region, as well as to individuals who have expressed prior interest in the project;
- distribution of posters to area municipalities for display at community and recreation centres;
- posting of information on the RMOC website;
- a media release.

A key consideration in promoting the Community Forum on Light Rail is the link to the OC Transpo Comprehensive Review, which is proceeding concurrently and is holding its own Community Forum on OC Transpo on 11 June 1998. To avoid possible confusion and the perception of duplication between the two projects, all event notices are presenting the two events side-by-side.

A subsequent Community Forum on Light Rail (the third, including one in February 1998 organized by the City Centre Coalition, Auto-Free Ottawa and Transport 2000 with assistance from RMOC) is planned for July 28, at which time the recommended project scope and procurement process will be presented for discussion and feedback.

To provide general public notice of the pilot project, the Community Forum and the concurrent environmental assessment process, a Notice of Intent was published in daily newspapers on the weekend of 23 May.

Stakeholder and Industry Consultation

Aside from the participation of many stakeholders on the Sounding Board, direct consultation with stakeholders is helping to ensure satisfactory identification and resolution of issues:

- CP Railway and Canadian National are being consulted to identify the terms of potential use of their respective railway corridors for the pilot project. The project consultants have also been in contact with the three principal suppliers of diesel light rail vehicles, as well as a supplier of refitted heavy rail vehicles, to identify issues and alternatives that must be considered at an early point in the procurement process.
- A meeting with Transport Canada has been held to identify key regulatory issues, such as:
 - the need to ensure that lightweight European-style light rail cars will successfully activate track circuits;
 - the need to develop a plan to minimize opportunities for members of the public to trespass on the right-of-way; and
 - the need to resolve discrepancies between the strength of European-style light rail cars and North America vehicle crash standards.
- A presentation was made to the CUO Planning Committee on 6 May 1998 to introduce the pilot project and answer questions.
- A dialogue with the Macdonald-Cartier Airport Authority has been initiated to identify the potential for and implications of a pilot project linkage to the existing terminal.
- A Notice of Intent was published on MERX (the open bidding notification system) on 2 June, for the attention of potential suppliers and bidders.

CONSULTATION

Several important aspects of ongoing public consultation relevant to the pilot project are discussed in the previous section of the report. A key consultation milestone is the Community Forum on Light Rail to be held on 18 June 1998.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

CONCLUSIONS

The Light Rail Pilot Project is proceeding according to schedule and budget. A presentation summarizing progress to date and current key issues will be made at the Transportation Committee meeting of 17 June 1998.

*Approved by
Pamela Sweet, MCIP, RPP*

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