



# The Corporation of the TOWN OF MILTON

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Report to: Mayor G. A. Krantz & Members of Council

From: M. Paul Cripps, P.Eng., Director, Engineering Services

Date: March 25, 2013

Report No. ENG-008-13

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Subject: 2013-2017 Milton Transit Master Plan – *Moving Milton Forward*

**RECOMMENDATION: THAT ENG-008-13 be received;**

**AND THAT Council approve the 2013-2017 Master Plan – *Moving Milton Forward* in principle, with recommended service level expansions subject to the annual budget process;**

**AND THAT Council endorse the 2013 Service Implementation Plan as outlined in Report ENG-008-13.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The 2013-2017 Transit Master Plan – *Moving Milton Forward* provides a comprehensive review of current Milton Transit service levels, system deficiencies, cost reduction and revenue generating opportunities and recommendations for service delivery improvement. *Moving Milton Forward* sets an overall direction to guide strategic decision-making for public transit services in Milton over the next five (5) years. This report also highlights a 2013 Service Implementation Plan based on recommendations of the Transit Master Plan, as preliminarily approved by Council during the 2013 Capital and Operating Budget deliberations.

## **REPORT**

### **Background**

Dillon Consulting Limited (Dillon) was retained by the Town to develop a five year Transit Master Plan entitled *Moving Milton Forward*. The purpose of the master plan is to undertake a comprehensive review of the Milton Transit system, identifying opportunities to reinforce existing successes and recommend innovative strategies that



meet the challenges of forecasted population and employment growth. *Moving Milton Forward* sets goals, targets and directions that will ultimately guide municipal decision-making for public transit services in Milton for the next five years.

With consultation from key stakeholders and the general public, this study develops a short-term and a long-term transit ridership and servicing growth plan, with subsequent capital infrastructure requirements, to significantly increase the use of and access to transit, while improving overall service efficiency and cost-effectiveness. *Moving Milton Forward* consists of recommendations to enhance the delivery and operation of the Milton Transit family of services, including but not limited to: conventional, paratransit, Community Bus and Trans-Cab services.

There are eight (8) supplemental working papers within *Moving Milton Forward*:

- Public Consultation Working Paper;
- Strategic Plan Working Paper;
- Milton Mobility Hub Working Paper;
- Transit Facility Working Paper;
- Conventional Transit 5-Year Plan Working Paper;
- Paratransit 5-Year Plan Working Paper;
- Transit Technology Working Paper; and
- Marketing and Communications Working Paper

All working papers were circulated to Council members on March 15, 2013 in electronic compact disc format and posted on the Town's website for public release on March 21, 2013. A Summary Document (Appendix I) provides an overview of the Master Plan, identifying all service adjustments, requirements and recommendations over a 5-Year planning / phasing horizon.

Throughout the course of the Transit Master Plan development, a comprehensive public consultation process was conducted to obtain feedback from the general public (transit riders / non-riders) and other key stakeholders, including: the business community / associations, educational institutions, Council members, Town Advisory Committee members and Region and Town staff.

## **Discussion**

The 2013-2017 Transit Master Plan – *Moving Milton Forward* involves a review of existing services and an extensive public consultation strategy to understand issues and receive feedback related to current services and proposed directions. Transit Master



Plan recommendations are based on service needs and technical assessments outlined by the project Technical and Steering Committees, Transit Advisory Committee, as well as consultation with the public, municipal staff, members of Council, transit users, contracted bus operators, system personnel and major stakeholder groups, guiding a “Made in Milton” solution to the delivery of transit services. Additionally, Dillon recommendations include inferences to best practices from peer group transit systems. Comprehensive consultation with the public and key stakeholders helped determine the overall role of transit in the community while developing an effective strategy aligned with municipal objectives and public interests.

Through consultation and assessment, several key themes were identified to direct and guide the Master Plan process:

- 1. Ridership Growth:** To maintain a high quality of life in Milton in light of rapid growth, there shall be a strong emphasis on Milton Transit contributing to high transit mode share targets for local, regional and inter-regional travel. To achieve a higher mode share for transit, an enhanced service level is required.
- 2. Strategic Investments:** Given funding limitations, planning and expanding the transit network shall be strategic and must achieve maximum ridership for investment made, while focusing investment on intensification corridors and nodes and identifying appropriate service delivery strategies in areas that are not transit supportive.
- 3. Seamless Regional and Inter-regional Travel:** Local transit shall be highly responsive to the interregional nature of travel that occurs to/from Milton, including providing effective connections to GO Transit rail and bus services.
- 4. Mobility Management:** To be effective, Milton shall be a broker of services, expanding the types of services provided and increasing transportation demand-oriented strategies. This will help realize the themes of ridership growth and strategic investment.
- 5. Technology, Productivity and Customer Service:** Customer service shall be a key component of how local transit operates. A key will be to implement Intelligent Transit Systems (ITS) to support and maintain customer expectations as well as improve system productivity.
- 6. Accessible Services:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) legislation will require a number of changes to how services are provided and



moving Milton further towards a full family of services approach will benefit the mobility needs of all residents.

These six (6) themes formed the basis of recommendations outlined in Schedule I, as a method of achieving broader community objectives for the delivery of public transit in Milton.

### **2013 Service Implementation Plan**

Given existing and forecasted population and employment growth patterns in Milton, it is apparent that the Town continues to establish an innovative transit system that can provide a demand-focused level of public mobility. However, in order for Milton Transit to be sustainable in the long term, service requirements must balance a “Made in Milton” service delivery approach with industry best practices and standards. As part of the 2013-2017 Transit Master Plan – *Moving Milton Forward*, it was recommended that the Town continue to build upon the current foundation of transit services developed over the last several years, to achieve a more reliable, convenient, efficient and cost-effective transit service. Several guiding principles were highlighted to support the establishment of the 2013 Service Implementation Plan, and were included in the 2013 Capital and Operating Budget:

- Using a market-based approach to service additions and/or modifications, connecting strong transit markets to various trip generating origins / destinations
- Balancing service level frequencies with travel demand
- Maximizing the number of GO Transit connections at the Milton GO Station
- Connecting with secondary school markets
- Phasing transit services into new neighbourhoods
- Maintaining route flexibility for future service expansion
- Introducing appropriate higher levels of service

Based on the preliminary recommendations from *Moving Milton Forward* and subsequent input from public feedback throughout the Transit Master Plan process, the following service programs were included and approved by Council as part of the 2013 Capital and Operating Budget deliberations:

#### **1. Introduction of Saturday Services**

Saturday transit service will provide community access for those unable to operate an automobile, such as students and some older adults. It will also provide a base residential service offering to allow for employer partnerships that operate on weekends, to serve a growing employment need. Lastly, Saturday service will provide retailers with



access to more customers who frequent service sector commercial activities during weekend periods.

It is important to note that ridership performance for Saturday service also includes the spin-off ridership gained during the regular weekday. It is expected that the availability of Saturday service will attract additional riders to weekday services and help convert occasional transit users to regular transit users, with increased sales of monthly pass fare media.

## **2. Custom Designed Employer Partnership Shuttle**

The introduction of employment-specific transit services is planned for 2013 to provide effective and efficient transit service to Milton's growing business community. Peak period service should be a priority to service an existing need and is not dependent on the pace of growth in the 401 Industrial and Business Area.

Part of the operating impact associated with the 2013 Capital Transit bus procurement budget included contingency service hours for the establishment of service partnership opportunities with local employment organizations. The use of these hours will be determined in consultation with employers on an as needed basis. A cost sharing agreement will be entered into with the interested employers with a performance target that will ensure that the service meets appropriate financial and performance targets.

## **3. Afternoon Peak Period GO Shuttle Service**

Until increased service frequency is established during peak periods, there remains inconsistency when attempting to connect with all GO Transit Trains due to the irregular nature of train departure and arrival times. As such, the deployment of additional GO Transit Drop-Off service will help provide GO Transit passengers with a Milton Transit connection for every GO Train arrival during the afternoon peak period. These flexible routes will allow for the service to accommodate irregular GO Train arrivals that are currently unmet. The service will operate similarly to the Evening Drop-Off service, using a drop-off zone-based approach. Smaller, medium-duty vehicles, approved during the 2013 Capital Budget process, would be used for this service due to lower potential capacity requirements and the need to travel into smaller residential neighbourhoods.

It should be noted that the added connectivity with all GO Trains in the afternoon period will also have an impact on overall ridership as it provides more flexibility to GO Transit customers taking Milton Transit at the GO Station, whether they use the GO Shuttle Service or a conventional fixed route.



#### **4. Service Modifications**

Notwithstanding the above service expansions, continued cost neutral route modifications based on achieved and projected service performance will be included as part of the 2013 Service Implementation Plan and will be reviewed with the Milton Transit Advisory Committee prior to commencement.

#### **Relationship to the Strategic Plan**

##### **Well managed growth, well planned spaces**

- Encourage the use of and access to public transit throughout the urban area and in a manner that provides access to rural residents.
- Encourage the enhancement of GO service to Milton

##### **A responsible, cost effective and accountable local government**

- Ensure the efficient management of capital assets and municipal services to meet existing and future demands.

##### **A safe, liveable and healthy community**

- Encourage the exploration of all partnership opportunities in the delivery of leisure / community / library services

#### **Financial Impact**

There are no budgetary impacts associated with the recommendations contained in this report. Transit Master Plan priorities and service implementation will be addressed and considered by Council through the annual Budget process.

Council approved the introduction of Saturday services as part of the 2013 Operating Budget process. Additionally, Council approved the capital investment and operating impacts associated with the purchase of three (3) specialized, medium duty transit vehicles, for the establishment of service partnership programs with local employers, shuttle service to connect with afternoon GO Trains, as well as the support for more efficient vehicle door-to-door Community Bus service. The procurement of specialized, medium duty transit vehicles (CORS-23-13) also provides the Town added flexibility to accommodate a family of services approach to delivering future conventional and paratransit services.



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Respectfully submitted,

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Director, Engineering Services

If you have any questions on the content of this report: Tony D'Alessandro, Coordinator,  
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Attachments: Appendix I. Milton Transit Master Plan Summary Document

CAO Approval: \_\_\_\_\_