

To: SPECIAL COUNCIL (STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING)

Meeting Date: 9/27/2021

Subject: **Public Meeting Report: Transit-Oriented Development Community Improvement Plan**

Submitted By: Kevin De Leebeeck, Director of Engineering

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Report No.: 22-089-CD

File No.: C1101

Wards Affected: All Wards

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 22-089-CD Public Meeting Report: Transit-Oriented Development Community Improvement Plan be received;

AND THAT the Transit-Oriented Development Community Improvement Plan be referred back to staff for a subsequent report and staff recommendation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Purpose

To present the statutory Public Meeting Report for the proposed Transit-Oriented Development Community Improvement Plan (TODCIP) and new financial incentive program.

Key Findings

- One of the main motives for the creation of the TODCIP is to establish a transit-oriented development financial incentive program to support and stimulate investment along the Central Transit Corridor and to encourage transit-supportive developments.
- A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is needed to implement a transit-oriented development financial incentive program.

Financial Implications

Funding from the Region of Waterloo in the amount of \$250,000 has been allocated for the transit-oriented development financial incentive program through the Region's Transit Supportive Strategy for Cambridge.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

- ☒ Strategic Action; or
- ☐ Core Service

Objective(s): GETTING AROUND - Emphasize connectivity and active transportation choices to help people travel in and beyond the city without a car

Strategic Action: Promote and develop more transportation options

Program: Not Applicable

Core Service: Not Applicable

Promoting sustainable transportation options, such as transit, is a strategic action of the City's Strategic Plan 2020-2023. In support of Stage 2 ION, the City is working with the Region of Waterloo to launch a transit-supportive grant program to increase ridership along the Central Transit Corridor, helping people move in and around the City without a vehicle.

BACKGROUND:

A CIP is a tool that allows municipalities to provide focus and direction for the long-term improvements of a defined project area. Section 28 of the Ontario Planning Act allows municipalities to prepare CIPs and offer financial incentives to be used by private property owners and developers to undertake improvement projects. Without a CIP, provision of these incentives to private businesses/developers would be considered 'bonusing' and would be contrary to the Municipal Act.

This new CIP will aim to assist existing businesses/property owners and new developments along the Central Transit Corridor, while contributing to the City's continued economic growth.

Cambridge Transit Supportive Strategy

As part of the approval for Stage 2 ION implementation in 2011, Regional Council endorsed an annual allocation of \$1,000,000 for a period of ten years (2011-2021) to implement a Regional Transit Supportive Strategy (TSS) for Cambridge. The ultimate goal of the TSS was to accelerate the implementation of Stage 2 ION LRT through

initiatives that improve transit ridership and/or encourage transit supportive development, specifically within the Central Transit Corridor in Cambridge.

Recognizing the need for developments to be more transit-supportive and the associated challenges, the concept of a financial incentive program to provide support for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and redevelopment projects within the Cambridge LRT Route/Central Transit Corridor was approved by Region of Waterloo Council as part of the 2018 Regional Transit Supportive Strategy for Cambridge.

Past Updates

- In June 2020, through Report 20-096(CD) Transit Oriented Development Community Improvement Plan, Council adopted By-law No.20-056 to designate a Community Improvement Project Area for the TODCIP, consisting of all lands described as within 800 meters of the LRT Route/Central Transit Corridor within the City of Cambridge.
- In February 2021 Memo IM21-003(CD) TODCIP – Launch of Public Consultation: was prepared for Council, introducing the public consultation plans and timelines.
- In February 2021 staff launched the public consultation period, consisting of a virtual platform on the Engage Cambridge website that included a presentation, survey, ideas section and the draft CIP for public comment. Staff have taken into consideration the comments and feedback received from the first round of consultation and have modified various criteria and eligibility of the program accordingly.

ANALYSIS:

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) incorporates a mix of urban design, land use, built form, public realm, and active transportation considerations all designed to encourage transit use. TOD can be used as a tool to increase transit ridership, provide mode choice, reduce vehicle miles traveled and meet other policy objectives, such as the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets pledged through TransformWR. Encouraging developments to have transit-supportive infrastructure can help encourage residents to choose walking, cycling and transit without complete dependence on a vehicle.

With this in mind, through the Region's Transit Supportive Strategy for Cambridge, staff developed a financial incentive program through a CIP that can be used to help achieve the vision of transit-oriented development within the Project Area. The incentive program will be designed to support developers and property owners incorporate

transit-supportive infrastructure and amenities into their developments, above and beyond the current requirements.

It is expected that the incentive program will open in 2023.

Next Steps

Staff have completed a revised Draft Community Improvement Plan, which can be viewed in Appendix A. Based on additional feedback from the revised Plan, a subsequent recommendation report will be presented to Council for consideration.

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

Planning Act

Section 28 of the Planning Act and sections 106 and 365.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001 provide the legislative framework for community improvement planning. Under Subsections 106(1) and (2) of the Municipal Act, municipalities are prohibited from directly or indirectly assisting any business or enterprise through the granting of bonuses.

However, pursuant to Section 106(3) of the Municipal Act, a municipality is exempt from the bonusing rule if it is exercising its authority under the provisions of Section 28(6) or (7) of the Planning Act or Section 365.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

Once a CIP is approved by Council, the municipality may exercise authority under Section 28(6) or (7) of the Planning Act or Section 365.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001, in order for the exception provided for in Section 106(3) of the Municipal Act, 2001 to apply.

By-law No.20-056

At the June 16, 2020 meeting, Council adopted By-law No.20-056 to designate a Community Improvement Project Area for the TODCIP, consisting of all lands described as within 800 meters of the LRT Route/Central Transit Corridor within the City of Cambridge.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Through the Region's Transit Support Strategy for Cambridge funding in the amount of \$250,000 has been allocated to a transit-oriented development incentive program of the CIP. Based on the success of the program, additional funding beyond the allocated amount may be discussed with the Region in future.

PUBLIC VALUE:

This initiative supports sustainable transportation options within the community. The project encourages innovative approaches to addressing environmental challenges, such as reducing transportation-related emissions by encouraging a shift to sustainable transportation modes, in particular transit.

This project also recognizes that the City has an active role to play in becoming a more sustainable city which demonstrates strong leadership.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:

N/A

PUBLIC INPUT:

The Planning Act requires public meetings be held before a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) can be considered by Council for adoption. This mandatory Public Meeting is being held on September 27, 2022 at 10 am. This meeting was advertised in the Cambridge times on September 1, 2022 in accordance with The Planning Act. The CIP was also circulated to all applicable levels of government and stakeholders.

Staff launched a public engagement process on February 12, 2021 through a virtual Public Consultation Centre (PCC) on Engage Cambridge. A survey and an 'ideas' tool were used to seek input from residents, developers and the business community. The link to the PCC was shared with a stakeholder contact list provided by Economic Development, the BIA's in Galt and Preston, a list of businesses provided on the BIA's websites, the Transit Supportive Strategy (TSS) working group, advisory committee's, and other stakeholders.

A summary of comments from the PCC, including staff responses will be included in a subsequent staff report.

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Transportation staff consulted with Regional staff through the TSS Working Group and engaged discussions with the City's Planning Services division, Economic Development, Finance and Legal Services. Staff have also consulted with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding the process of creating a CIP. An outline of circulated agencies can be viewed in Appendix B.

CONCLUSION:

The goals of the TODCIP are consistent with provincial legislation and the strategic direction of the City of Cambridge and Region of Waterloo. This Plan also supports and

promotes a number of municipal policies and plans with Transportation Demand Management (TDM) goals, such as the Official Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, the Strategic Plan, and the Cycling Master Plan. The creation of a new financial incentive program will support development and help build transit ridership along the Central Transit Corridor, in preparation for Stage 2 ION.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: **No**

By-law: **No**

Budget Amendment: **No**

Policy: **Yes**

APPROVALS:

This report has gone through the appropriate workflow and has been reviewed and or approved by the following as required:

Director

Deputy City Manager

Chief Financial Officer

City Solicitor

City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 22-089-CD Appendix A – Draft Transit-Oriented Development Community Improvement Plan
2. 22-089-CD Appendix B – Circulation List