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**REPORT TO:** Planning & Strategic Initiatives Committee  
**DATE OF MEETING:** April 28, 2014  
**SUBMITTED BY:** Alain Pinard, Director of Planning  
**PREPARED BY:** Natalie Goss, Senior Planner - 519-741-2200 ext. 7067  
Kendra Martin, Communications and Marketing Associate  
ext. 7547  
**WARD(S) INVOLVED:** ALL  
**DATE OF REPORT:** April 7, 2014  
**REPORT NO.:** CSD-14-025  
**SUBJECT:** **PLANNING AROUND RAPID TRANSIT STATIONS  
(PARTS) – PHASE 2: COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That staff proceed with Approach #3 for communication and stakeholder engagement of the Planning Around Rapid Transit Stations (PARTS) Station Plans as described in report CSD-14-025 and subject to purchasing processes.**

**BACKGROUND:**

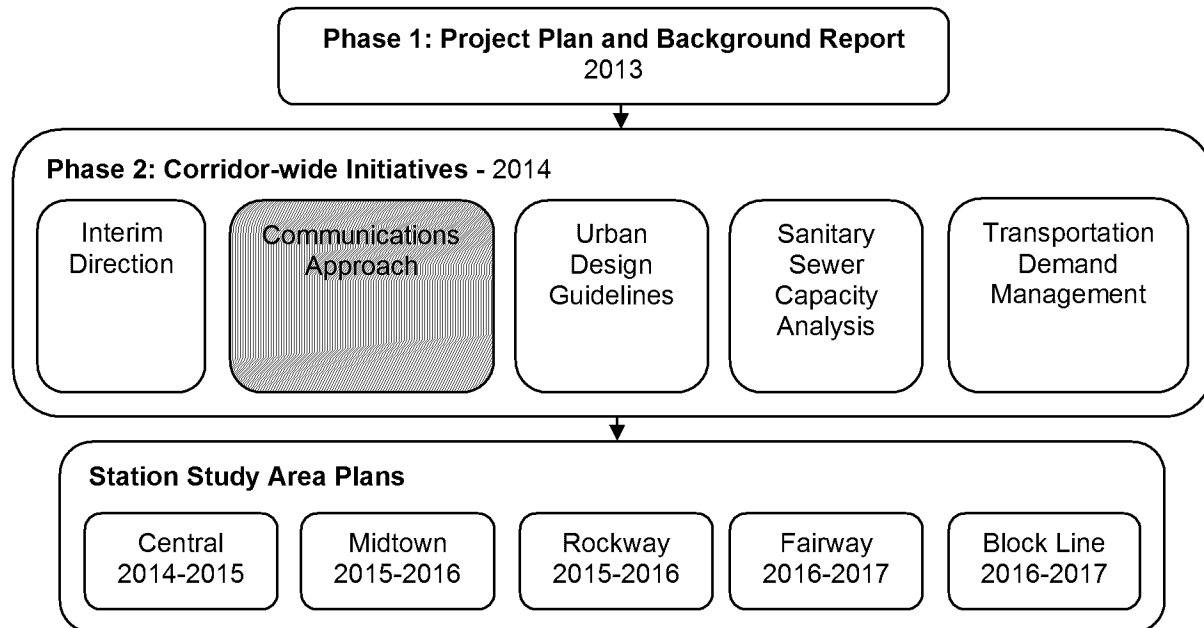
The Planning Around Rapid Transit Stations (PARTS) project was introduced to Council through report CSD-12-150 presented at the November 12, 2012 Council Strategy Session. PARTS Phase 1 concluded in December 2013 with report CSD-13-104 wherein Council supported staff to proceed with PARTS Phase 2 (corridor-wide initiatives) and Station Study Area Planning in accordance with the sequencing and timing outlined in that report. This report is about one of the five corridor-wide initiatives of Phase 2.

**REPORT:**

Light rail transit (LRT) has the potential to be a major factor in the long-term growth and continued economic prosperity of our area. With it comes the potential for change in the areas close to the stations. In order to ensure that the proper framework to guide growth and stability in these locations is present, the City has started a detailed and comprehensive planning initiative referred to as Planning Around Rapid Transit Stations (PARTS). PARTS will investigate and confirm land use, engineering and community infrastructure, streetscapes, urban design, transportation implications and, transportation demand management techniques within walking distance of the stops. PARTS does not include discussion on the merits of rapid transit or the location and design of the actual rapid transit line or stations as those are initiatives led by the Region of Waterloo who has jurisdiction over the LRT system. The Region has their own communications program regarding those matters which the City is coordinating our efforts with.

PARTS Phase 1 resulted in a project plan and background report. Within this project plan (Figure 1) five corridor-wide initiatives are to be completed in advance of the PARTS Station Study Area Plans. One of these five initiatives is to develop a communications approach for conducting Station Study Area Plans as they will involve significant stakeholder engagement.

**Figure 1: Planning Around Rapid Transit Stations (PARTS) Project Plan**



**PARTS Communications Approach**

The City encourages community involvement in its processes and understands its value. Why is it important for the PARTS Station Study Area Plan process to go above and beyond the minimum legislative requirements? PARTS is the process that will be used to manage change in the areas surrounding the rapid transit stations. PARTS will create a new or modified framework that will establish the future direction of growth and infrastructure to support that growth. Because this process will deal with change in existing built-up areas and recommend ways to manage and shape the direction of growth, it is important for people that live and work in these areas to be a voice in shaping the future of their neighbourhoods in advance of anticipated change.

Staff is currently exploring opportunities to undertake each Station Study Area Plan as an Integrated Planning Act (Official Plan Amendment/Secondary Plan/Zoning By-law Amendment) and Class Environmental Assessment Act (Master Plan) process. An integrated approach under these pieces of legislation provides opportunities to streamline and jointly consider planning and infrastructure options and recommendations. Should this process be utilized, the requirements for consultation (notices, public meetings etc.) under both the Planning Act and Environmental Assessment Act must be followed. As Station Study Area Plans will include stakeholder involvement to help determine the future of these areas, staff sees merit in going above and beyond the minimum legislative requirements.

The PARTS Phase 1 Project Plan and Background Report outlined three (3) preliminary communications approaches. These approaches are summarized in Figure 2 as follows.

**Figure 2: Potential Communications Approaches for PARTS**

<p><i>Approach #1</i>                  Uses existing tools that are readily available to staff and includes online and traditional print campaigns.                  (Cost Estimate: less than \$10,000)*</p>		
<p><b>Tools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters/flyers</li> <li>• Media outreach</li> <li>• Editorial content in City Talk and Your Kitchener</li> <li>• SMS, social media, surveys/polls, e-newsletter</li> <li>• Websites</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Least expensive option</li> <li>• Utilizes existing tools</li> <li>• Can be done within existing resource capacity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer communication and engagement opportunities</li> <li>• Does not make use of technology for visual illustration</li> </ul>
<p><i>Approach #2</i>                  Utilizes the same tools outlined in Approach 1 but provides for more intensive use of them.                  (Cost Estimate: \$10,000-\$30,000)*</p>		
<p><b>Tools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tools in Approach 1</li> <li>• Direct mail</li> <li>• On-site signage</li> <li>• Physical hub for engagement</li> <li>• Print, radio, TV advertising</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides more opportunities for communications</li> <li>• Increased ability of reaching the target audience and achieving more participation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More costly than Approach 1</li> <li>• May experience cost increases depending on the frequency of communications</li> <li>• Additional resources may be required for implementation of some tools in the range of \$5,000-\$20,000</li> </ul>
<p><i>Approach #3</i>                  In addition to the tools outlined above, makes use of new and innovative techniques to allow for intensive personal engagement.                  (Cost Estimate: \$30,000-\$60,000)*</p>		
<p><b>Tools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tools in Approaches 1 and 2</li> <li>• Virtual town hall events</li> <li>• Enhanced online engagement</li> <li>• Experiential learning (bus tours/bike tours)</li> <li>• Live streaming of public meetings</li> <li>• Videos</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides opportunities for                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increased effectiveness of messaging and communicating with the community</li> <li>- the City to demonstrate leadership in community engagement</li> <li>- meaningful community engagement</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Utilizes tools that make engagement easier to access</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High costs</li> <li>• Requires additional staff or consultant services</li> </ul>

\*Cost estimates do not include staff time.

Staff has further considered these three approaches and is recommending to proceed with Approach #3. This approach allows for traditional methods to continue to be used and also allows staff to take advantage of a range of different engagement tools throughout the project. This approach aligns with the results of the recent Compass Kitchener Environics Survey (January 2014) in two ways: it provides new ways for the community to ask questions and provide input into decisions, and; incorporates many opportunities for online engagement while offering in-person engagement opportunities as well. It is also consistent with the vision for Kitchener’s Open Government framework as it will provide opportunities for information sharing and meaningful, accessible public engagement through innovative and collaborative methods.

The framework for the proposed communications approach #3 is outlined in Appendix A. This approach includes opportunities for engagement at key milestones throughout Station Study Area Planning and incorporates a “toolbox” of engagement methods for each milestone from which appropriate methods may be selected for each Station Study Area Plan. The “toolbox” includes opportunities to participate both in person and online through roundtable discussions, stakeholder interviews, walking tours, surveys, live chats and town halls.

Staff is committed to engaging the community in a meaningful way through PARTS. The recommended communications approach does this in the following ways:

- There will be opportunities for engagement at key milestones through the process;
- There will be clear links between input gathered and the final Station Study Area Plan, Official Plan Amendment and, Zoning By-law Amendment and any other implementation document;
- Stakeholders will be given the opportunity to learn about PARTS, city planning and infrastructure, and;
- Engagement will occur through a variety of methods and be offered during weekdays, evenings and weekends and in some cases, through on-line sources, 24/7 providing stakeholders with the option to participate when and how they choose.

The recommended communications approach will require a significant resource commitment. Given the scope of it and the multitude of other projects to which existing staff resources are committed, staff recommends that consultants be retained to facilitate all in-person engagement sessions for the Central Stations Study Area Plan. To implement the recommended communications approach, staff will be responsible for all communication needs (i.e. on-line engagement, advertisements, design and printing of all materials) with consultants facilitating the in-person engagement sessions. Preliminary cost estimates for the consultant services range from approximately \$30,000-\$60,000. Services include preparing discussion materials, leading three to six in-person sessions and; collecting, analyzing and reporting input received.

The benefits of retaining consultants for this purpose include:

- Removing any perceived bias of staff leading sessions;
- Utilizing trained, independent and impartial facilitators to ensure that the process is equitable, respectful and the discussion remains focused;
- Allowing staff to be available as technical resources, and;
- Bringing experience with conducting public engagement in the form and scale envisioned for the Central Stations Study Area Plan.

### **Next Steps**

As a first step in the Central Stations Study Area Plan, a detailed communications plan will be developed based on the general communications approach outlined in this report. This will include selection of appropriate methods of consultation for each stage in the process and appropriate stakeholders to involve. The preparation of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant facilitation services will also be prepared. There will be opportunities to reconsider and/or refine the general communications approach for future Station Plans upon the conclusion of the Central Stations Study Area Plan if required.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH CITY OF KITCHENER STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The PARTS project most directly aligns with the Community Priority of “Development” in the City’s Strategic Plan.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The recommended PARTS communications approach is estimated to cost between \$30,000 and \$60,000. A more accurate amount will be known following the preparation of a detailed plan and Request for Proposal by September for the Central Stations Study Area Plan. The funds for this cost estimate are currently available within the existing Planning Studies Capital account (primary source is Development Charges).

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

PARTS Station Study Area planning will utilize the primary themes of “INFORM”, “CONSULT”, and; “COLLABORATE” from the City’s Community Engagement Strategy.

**CONCLUSION:**

PARTS Station Study Area Planning provides an opportunity for those who live and work in these areas to help shape their neighbourhoods. The recommended communications approach outlined in this report provides opportunities for information sharing and meaningful accessible engagement. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to be involved in Station Study Area Planning at key milestones through a variety of methods (both in-person and online) and at times that are most convenient for them.

**REVIEWED BY:**

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Colleen Collins, Manager, Corporate Communications

<b>ACKNOWLEDGED BY:</b> Michael May, Deputy CAO Community Services Department
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Attachment:

**Appendix A:** General Communications Approach for PARTS Station Study Area Plans  
(Approach Three)

**Appendix A –General Communications Approach for PARTS Station Study Area Plans (Approach Three)**

Major Milestones	Objective	Stakeholders	Toolbox of Engagement Methods*	City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy
<p>Vision and Guiding Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information about the objectives of the Station Study Area and existing initiatives in the area</li> <li>• Confirm vision and guiding principles</li> <li>• Understand opportunities and constraints</li> <li>• Outline next steps in process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landowners/occupants</li> <li>• Business owners</li> <li>• Resident associations</li> <li>• Development Industry</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Broader public</li> <li>• Future residents, employees, visitors</li> <li>• Departments/Agencies</li> <li>• Ward Councillors</li> </ul>	<p><i>In Person</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roundtable discussions</li> <li>• Stakeholder interviews</li> <li>• Student sessions</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Walking tours</li> <li>• Ideas board</li> </ul> <p><i>Web-based</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking tours</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform and Collaborate</li> </ul>
<p>Review of Future Scenarios</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate on several future development scenarios</li> <li>• Review and gather input, including a high level technical analysis (i.e., infrastructure, cultural/natural heritage, built form)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as above</li> </ul>	<p><i>In Person</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Hall</li> <li>• Roundtable discussions</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Stakeholder interviews</li> <li>• Student sessions</li> </ul> <p><i>Web-based</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Hall</li> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Live chat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate</li> </ul>
<p>Preferred Alternative Analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult on the preferred alternative and supporting studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as above</li> </ul>	<p><i>In Person</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open House</li> </ul> <p><i>Web-based</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Comment form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult</li> </ul>
<p>Final Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather input on the implementation tools (i.e. Station Study Area Plan, Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law)</li> <li>• Notify and inform the community of the Station Study Area Plan and associated OPA/Secondary Plan/ZBL statutory public meeting and results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory Public Meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult and Inform</li> </ul>

**\*Toolbox of Methods Defined**

**Roundtable Discussions:** A meeting set up to discuss a subject on equal terms in small groups. Roundtable discussions may start with a presentation.

**Stakeholder Interviews:** An opportunity to discuss any issues or opportunities with stakeholders in a one-on-one interview

**Student Session:** Similar to a workshop but targeted to Post Secondary, High School and/or Elementary School youth. It is anticipated that student sessions would take place at schools during class time. Student Sessions may start with a presentation.

**Open House:** An event where the doors are open to the public to attend and participate with staff on a certain project that may impact them in some way. An Open House may start with a presentation.

**Walking Tours:** An opportunity for the community to physically or virtually experience a street or neighbourhood.

**Ideas Board:** Similar to a vision board where the community can visually put up what they would like to see, from artwork to drawings to verbiage.

**Survey:** A series of questions asked in person, via phone or online to determine public opinion that will be extrapolated to determine generalities of an entire population. There are opportunities to make surveys statistically valid.

**Workshop:** A meeting or series of meetings used to exchange information and encourage interaction within small groups to general ideas or solve problems. A Workshop may start with a presentation.

**Town Hall:** An opportunity for the community to ask questions and provide input directly to staff. A Town Hall may start with a presentation and include a panel of staff or “experts” to which questions may be directed.

**Live Chat:** Through social media – host online chats or “Ask an Expert” sessions about certain topics.

**Comment Forms:** A written way to provide input into a particular topic.

**Statutory Public Meeting:** A meeting held at a Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee and/or Kitchener City Council meeting as required under the Planning Act.