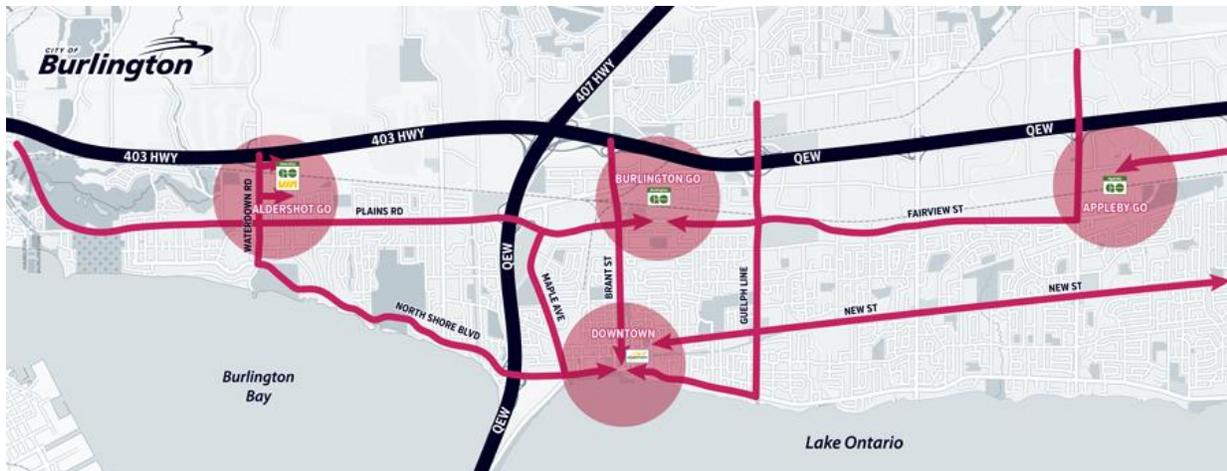


Mobility Hubs Background

As Burlington transitions from a suburban to an urban community, the city plans to focus future population growth in the Mobility Hubs.

“A Mobility Hub is a location that has several transportation options and is a concentrated point for a mix of uses such as transit, employment, housing, recreation and shopping. Mobility hubs will be neighbourhoods that are environmentally friendly, infrastructure-efficient, walkable, bikeable and transit-oriented.”



City of Burlington's Mobility Hubs

There are four Mobility Hubs being planned in Burlington around the Aldershot, Burlington and Appleby GO stations, and Downtown. Currently BEDC is only focusing on and developing a vision for the three GO Mobility Hubs. The city is preparing secondary plans and implementation strategies for each Mobility Hub. These plans will address land use, urban design, servicing, public transportation, parking and parks and open space needs. The Mobility Hubs will be a key focus for employment growth in Burlington with potential to add 64,100 jobs and 69,200 people in the 3 Go Mobility Hubs.

BEDC is in the process of developing an employment vision and recommendations on an implementation strategy for the hubs, which will align with the city's overall vision. The BEDC team has engaged over 40 stakeholders in the three Go Station Mobility Hubs areas (Aldershot GO, Burlington GO, and Appleby GO), by conducting one-on-one interviews with existing businesses, current and potential land owners, developers and commercial realtors to help develop the GO Mobility Hubs Employment Vision. A summary of the project Workplan is below:



BEDC's GO Mobility Hubs Process

This document contains the summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) and guiding principles that emerged from these interviews. BEDC will now be interviewing key partner organizations to include their valuable feedback in the Mobility Hubs employment visioning process.

Mobility Hub SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis	
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity to Toronto • Strong Interest from residential market • GO Train all day service • Proximity to highways • Existing residential/amenity connectivity • Appeal to knowledge-based businesses/office uses • Appeal to commuters living in Burlington • Ability to draw talent from Niagara to Toronto 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of market vision for industrial • No current transit plan/focus • Lack of current onsite amenities • Parking will be too low for current office market • No highway visibility for employers • Market unclear on employment vision • Strong transit connectivity only focused East not West and North • Won't currently have the population density to support services and amenities • Lack of employment vision • Political Inconsistency
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating amenity-rich and connected employment areas that appeal to future employers • Redevelop existing uses to create better employment outcomes • Defining the types of employment uses we would like 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising prices per acre for employment land • Majority of developers are residential without experience/vision for employment • Displacement of industrial

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize new technology and innovative design • Create population/job intensification that will allow transit to function • Create a mobility hubs implementation team to support development • Special permit/processing area • Create community draws for hubs as a new neighborhood focal point • Perception of stable political system • Zoning review • Branding and employment attraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs may be replaced with like for like i.e. retail and service jobs • MTO and CN rail approvals • NIMBYism • Industrial operations moving out/recognize limited lifespan in mobility hubs • Business cycles • Environmental constraints can delay development • Industrial uses that are incompatible may not be willing to move out • Competition from other areas
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Strengths

One of the major strengths of the mobility hubs is their connectivity and easy access to Toronto. With scheduled improvements to the GO network by Metrolinx, including frequent all-day service, transit users will be able travel to and from Toronto faster and more conveniently. The strategic location of the GO infrastructure provides the city with connectivity not only to Toronto, but also to the Niagara area, allowing Burlington to attract talent from both regions. The GO connectivity is beneficial to commuters in Burlington who work outside the city as it provides them with an alternative transportation option that may be more convenient than driving. The proximity of the GO transit stations to the QEW is attractive to knowledge-based businesses and provides employees with easy transportation access. The strong ability to attract people from across the region and the appeal of the hubs to the emerging workforce demographics will help draw companies to the hubs as a business location, particularly professional services and companies with a knowledge-based business model.

The mobility hubs are not only attractive locations for employers, but also for residential developers. There is a strong interest in the mobility hubs from the residential market because of the land values and locational factors. The residential development in the mobility hubs will be well-connected to surrounding amenities and employment uses and an efficient regional transit system.

Weaknesses

One of the biggest weaknesses of the mobility hubs, from an employment perspective, is that there is a lack of vision for industrial uses from the current market. The market shows strong interest in residential development, causing an increase in land values that may be too steep for industrial uses. The lack of highway visibility in some locations may also discourage businesses who are focused on the prestige of highway visibility for their business.

Although developers are willing to engage in discussions on integrating employment uses within mixed-use developments, they are unclear of the employment vision. The current vision and policy are unclear in defining the desired employment uses within the mobility hubs, and the type of development that would be supportive of such uses. Currently, the mobility hubs are lacking amenities, including public

open spaces and service commercial uses. The existing population density in the hubs is not enough to be supportive of the required services and amenities for the future demographic that the city desires to attract to the hubs.

Although one of the strengths of the mobility hubs is the GO transit connectivity, it is a regional service that is not well-connected to the local transit network. The regional GO transit is also focused on the eastern connection to Toronto and does not provide the same level of connection West of Burlington. The local transit network is highly disconnected from a regional perspective, particularly to the North of the city with no connectivity to Milton. Regional transit must be better connected and more efficient to provide transit users access to the Go transit stations and to other key locations within the city to minimize automobile use.

The parking within the mobility hubs is too low for the current office market. GO transit is a viable option for employees, but since the service is not integrated with local transit, it causes commuters to rely on automobile use. Due to the increasing land values within the mobility hubs, providing parking will become increasingly expensive with the need to move to underground parking and parking structures.

Opportunities

The mobility hubs present a significant opportunity for Burlington's future growth and development. The hubs will create opportunities for intensification and mixed-use development that is well-connected by way of transit. The mobility hubs can accommodate and support a well-functioning transit system through policies to intensify population and employment growth. The hubs can be developed into new neighbourhood focal points within the city that are attractive to residents, visitors and employers. Further, the hubs can support amenity-rich areas that appeal to future employers, integrating service commercial uses and spaces for public interaction. The redevelopment of the mobility hubs provides an opportunity to incorporate smart city elements, such as new technology and innovative design, that enhance the quality of life and improve efficiency and sustainability.

There is an opportunity to redevelop existing uses in the hubs to achieve better employment outcomes by better defining the desired future employment uses for the areas. One of the biggest opportunities to ensure that the mobility hubs vision is inclusive of employment uses is the zoning review of Bylaw 2020, which will take place in 2019. The zoning review will allow for policy changes that better represent the future vision for the hubs. Policies that encourage desirable employment uses and discourage undesirable uses for the hubs can be recommended through the zoning review.

The implementation of the mobility hubs could be supported by appointing an independent team that assists with the development within the hubs and by designating specific zones within the hubs that allow for a special permit process for desired uses.

The hubs represent a significant opportunity from a branding and employment attraction perspective. The hubs will create a new urban-suburban employment environment with many of the features typically found in a downtown core not a suburban office environment. Burlington is in a competitive position in which it can create well-connected, amenity rich employment areas within the hubs at a lower cost and with less transportation congestion than Downtown Toronto.

Threats

One of the biggest threats to the development of the mobility hubs from an employment perspective is the rising price per acre for land. The increasing land values are not affordable for industrial businesses and presents a potential threat to the current industrial uses within the hubs. Many of the existing businesses may be forced to move outside of the hubs to other parts of Burlington, or to other cities. Residential land development within the hubs may displace industrial businesses, including some key employers, to other areas.

The majority of the developers within the mobility hubs have a focus on residential development and have limited vision and experience in relation to employment land development. Their lack of vision and experience in employment development may be another factor that leads to the loss of employment uses within the hubs as they may convert them into bedroom communities. Industrial businesses within the hubs recognize their limited lifespan and are preparing to move out of the hubs, except for the Appleby GO hub. There is a danger of the employment uses within the hubs being replaced with like for like of commercial and service-based jobs versus professional services and knowledge-based jobs.

External development approvals and requirements may present a threat in achieving development. The Aldershot mobility hub is near the QEW and subject to MTO authority. CN Rail requirements for development may also present a barrier and must be better understood.

Integrating employment uses within mixed-use developments or near residential developments, can give way to NIMBYism and thus delay development in the hubs. Another barrier for employment uses within the hubs may be the nature of business cycles. Depending on the timeline of development and how it coincides with the various stages of the business cycle, businesses may not be able to integrate well into the hubs. The changing nature of business cycles can prevent developers from successfully attracting the desired employment uses within mixed-use developments.

Draft Guiding Principles

Based on the best practice analysis and stakeholder engagement completed to date, the following draft guiding principles have been developed to inform the GO Mobility Hubs employment vision:

Guiding Principles	Description
<p>1. Develop each hub into a complete community that has a mix of residential, employment, and recreational uses</p>	<p>The hubs will be compact, mixed-use urban neighbourhoods that will enhance the quality of life by providing a range of amenities and services catered to residents and businesses within a walking distance.</p>
<p>2. Focus on planning for future services and infrastructure</p>	<p>Plan for services and infrastructure, both physical and virtual, in a manner that meets future trends and needs. The mobility hubs will be able to accommodate the future demographic and business needs and will require long-term planning and revision. The future vision will be flexible and be able to adapt to current conditions.</p>
<p>3. Develop a unique identity for each hub and a marketing brand focusing on attracting people and talent to the area</p>	<p>Each of the GO station hubs encompasses a unique identity, which will be enhanced to make them into desirable places for residents, employers and visitors alike. The distinctive brand of each hub area will be</p>

	<p>representative of its current strengths and will ensure the area is an attractive destination instead of a pass-through zone for transit users.</p>
<p>4. Identify key employment growth areas in the hubs and market to the future workforce and industries</p>	<p>The areas designated for employment growth within the hubs will attract desirable uses and accommodate the evolving requirements of employers. The employment uses will be compatible with the surrounding uses of the area and will cater to future businesses and talent. The hubs will provide a range of affordable housing options, transit connectivity, and amenities that will support the future workforce.</p>
<p>5. Integrate the mobility hubs into the city fabric and provide seamless transportation connectivity</p>	<p>Ensure that the mobility hubs vision aligns with the vision for the broader City of Burlington. The hubs will be individual communities that are connected seamlessly to the rest of the city through infrastructure such as street network, transit, sidewalk and cycling paths, etc. The hubs will not only connect the East and West ends of the city, but will also provide North-South connections.</p>
<p>6. Engage stakeholders to develop a collaborative implementation plan for the Mobility Hubs vision.</p>	<p>It is essential to engage stakeholders at all levels early in the process to develop a holistic implementation strategy and business plan for the development of the hubs. The execution of the vision may be in jeopardy without strong collaboration to ensure the resources and tools are in place to reach the full potential of the hubs and ensure a smooth development process on a site by site basis.</p>