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## Baseline Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor

### **Q: What is the Baseline Road Bus Rapid Transit Corridor?**

**A:** The Baseline Road Bus Rapid Transit Corridor is a proposed transportation facility along Baseline and Heron roads between Heron Station and Baseline Station, and along Richmond Road and Holly Acres Road between Baseline Station and Bayshore Station. The corridor will feature at-grade, median bus-only lanes, as well as new protected cycle tracks and sidewalks to improve the environment for cyclists and pedestrians. The Baseline corridor will continue to have four lanes for general traffic.

### **Q: When is this project planned?**

**A:** An environmental assessment study is underway and is expected to be completed and presented to Council in 2017. Once approvals are in place, the detailed design process would begin, which could take approximately two years to complete. Construction would follow when funding is secured.

### **Q: Why is the facility needed?**

**A:** The City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) identifies an expanded rapid transit network as a key component in reaching the city-wide goal of having 30 per cent of all commuting trips made by transit. The Baseline transit facility will provide transit customers with a reliable and quick east-west commute without having to go through downtown. The corridor connects many employment and development areas, commercial centres, and education and government institutions. It also links to the O-Train Confederation Line at Bayshore and Baseline stations, and O-Train Trillium Line at Confederation Heights station.

### **Q: What is the preferred alignment?**

**A:** The transit facility extends nearly 14 kilometres between Bayshore Station and Heron Station, along a corridor following Holly Acres Road, Richmond Road, Baseline Road, Heron Road, and includes the area around Baseline Station and Navaho Drive.

### **Q: What is in the corridor?**

**A:** Baseline Road will be redeveloped into a complete street, meaning there will be facilities for all major modes of transportation (e.g. cycling, driving, etc.). In each direction, the widened road will include:

- A bus-only lane in the median
- Two general traffic lanes
- A narrow boulevard/maintenance strip
- A protected cycle track, or paved shoulders (rural cross-section)
- A sidewalk (urban cross-section)

Twenty-four new transit stations are proposed, and would generally be located at major intersections.



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**Baseline Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor****Q: Will this project affect the Central Experimental Farm?**

**A:** Yes, some property at the Central Experimental Farm will be required for the road widening. Discussions with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAC) have taken place over the course of this study. A buffer strip along the Farm's frontage, in the form of a landscaped "shelter belt," will also be constructed to protect fields against wind, erosion, snow drift and salt spray.

**Q: Does this project require additional property?**

**A:** Along some stretches of the corridor, the existing right of way is very narrow, and insufficient to accommodate the elements of a complete street. In some cases this may involve acquisition of very little property along the edge of an adjacent property; however, in other cases the entire property may be needed. The proposed design has a reduced project footprint wherever possible.

**Q: How many properties will be affected?**

**A:** At this stage of the project, it appears that approximately 173 residential properties will be affected. Of these, up to 15 may need to be acquired in full. Forty-four commercial properties will also be affected. Frontage strips will be required from 10 federal/provincial properties. The detailed design may result in further refinements regarding the amount of property required.

**Q: What is the City's process for acquiring properties?**

**A:** The City will negotiate with owners in accordance with the City's Real Property Acquisition Policy, on the basis of market value and applicable entitlements. At this stage of the project (an environmental assessment study), it is too early to initiate the property acquisition process. Before that can happen, funding for implementation has to be secured and detailed design has to be undertaken to finalize the property requirements.

**Q: Why not just reduce the car lanes to one per direction, to avoid property impacts?**

**A:** The option of reducing vehicle traffic to one lane in each direction was explored as an alternative configuration, but it was determined that congestion levels would be too high to accommodate the existing and future transportation needs of motorized non-transit vehicles.

**Q: What is the estimated ridership expected to use the Baseline BRT corridor?**

**A:** Currently, between 6,400 and 6,700 transit customers use the corridor every day – with about 1,500 people using the corridor during the weekday morning peak hour. Ridership is expected to grow as a result of the improved service along the corridor. By 2031, more than 10,000 customers per day are predicted to use the Baseline corridor.

**Q: What would be the travel time savings for transit customers?**

**A:** There is an estimated saving of 6.5 minutes between Baseline Station and Heron Station for afternoon transit customers. Customers can expect improved reliability and better operating speeds throughout the day due to the bus-only lanes, as buses will no longer have to operate in mixed traffic.



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**Q: Did public consultations take place?**

**A:** Yes, the City has been consulting with the public since April 2012. The City has already held three public open houses and will hold a fourth on Wednesday, October 5, 2016 to present the recommended plan to residents. Meetings with affected land owners are also planned for Tuesday, October 4 and Wednesday, October 5.

**Q: What is the budget for the current study?**

**A:** The study budget for the environmental assessment is \$1.5 million.

**Q: Is this transit project eligible for federal stimulus funding?**

**A:** Yes, this is a candidate project for the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF). The City has received federal funding for detailed design, which is the next step following the completion of the environmental assessment.

**Q: How much would it cost to build the Baseline BRT project?**

**A:** Implementation of the Baseline BRT project will only happen if the City is able to secure funding from provincial and federal partners. The proposed corridor is planned in two stages, with the cost breakdown for each listed below:

- The section between Baseline Station and Heron Station is considered part of the 2031 Affordable Network. The estimated cost of this stage is \$161 million (2019 dollars).
- The section from Bayshore Station to Baseline Station is part of the Network Concept plan (post 2031). Although this section will not be completed until sometime after 2031, the City's Transportation Master Plan identifies the implementation of transit priority measures in the affordable plan prior to 2031. The estimated cost of these interim measures is \$7 million (2016 dollars), which includes modifications along the corridor to provide priority for transit operation.

**Q: What are the next steps?**

**A:** Public feedback from the final open house on October 5 will be reviewed, and refinements made to the plan as appropriate. The study recommendations will then be presented to the Transportation Committee and Council in early 2017, with the formal environmental assessment process completed by mid-2017. Detailed design would follow.

