

# FUNDING A STUDY OF THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF TRANSIT

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE  
CITY OF BURLINGTON'S  
INTEGRATED MOBILITY PLAN

PRESENTED TO THE ENVIRONMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
APRIL 13, 2020



**BURLINGTON FOR ACCESSIBLE SUSTAINABLE TRANSIT**

**BFASTRANSIT.CA**

---

---

# **FUNDING A STUDY OF THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF TRANSIT**

**Comments to the Environment, Infrastructure and  
Community Services Committee on the proposed budget  
for the City of Burlington's Integrated Mobility Plan  
Burlington for Accessible Sustainable Transit (BFAST)**

**April, 2020**

The budget recommendation from the Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services Committee for the Integrated Mobility Program is an important milestone in the development of a crucial policy framework that can guide Burlington to a carbon-neutral future. We applaud the efforts of City staff in engaging with community stakeholders and producing a Request for Proposal that reflects a broad consensus that will guide the efforts of its consultants. We congratulate the City in choosing Dillon Consulting, a company with experience in dealing with Burlington's transportation issues, as the successful bidder.

While we strongly support the goals of the IMP and the plans for its development, we believe a key element has not been included in the Plan's budget: the need for a study on the economic benefits of transit. A number of studies have already been done on the benefits of transit to communities and the results are unequivocal: investment in transit is one of the most productive ways a municipality can spend money. Each dollar invested, studies have shown, will bring a significant return on investment through savings on infrastructure spending, increased household budgets spent locally, environmental benefits and other factors. Because these benefits have been shown to be so large, we believe it is important that such a study of this nature be done, for the benefit of both the IMP and the City's Climate Action Plan.

There are two other compelling reasons to fund a study on the economic benefits of transit:

- A renowned economist, whose firm is located here in Burlington, has already completed such studies for nine other communities in Ontario, including our neighbouring city of Hamilton.
- The economist has already developed a methodology, allowing for significant cost efficiencies. We have been informed that the cost for a Burlington study would be a small fraction of the budget the Environment Committee is considering today.

## **BFAST COMMENTS ON PROPOSED IMP BUDGET**

---

We emphasize that we are not criticizing the budget that has been presented to the Committee. We believe that a small addition to the budget would add a critical source of new information that would greatly assist Council in making a final determination on both the IMP and the actions that will flow from its implementation.

As always, we would welcome any further questions that members of the Committee might have.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

Doug Brown  
Chair, BFAST Steering Committee  
band@cogeco.ca  
905-632-4774

Collin Gribbons  
Member, BFAST Steering Committee  
collin@collingribbons.ca  
289-337-8214

**REFERENCES:**

Dr. Atif Kubursi, *Economic Impact of the Community Climate Change Action Plan City of Hamilton*, Econometric Research Ltd, 2016. <http://cleanairhamilton.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/7-Kubursi.pdf>

McCormick Rankin Corporation, and Dr. Jeff Casello, University of Waterloo, for the Canadian Urban Transit Association, *The Economic Impact of Transit Investment: A National Survey*, Metropolitan Knowledge International, 2010

Victoria Transport Policy Institute, <https://vtpi.org/>

Canadian Automobile Association, *CAA Provides Real Picture of Annual Driving Cost*. <https://www.caa.ca/caa-provides-real-picture-of-annual-driving-costs/>