



SUBJECT: Relocation of the Burlington Transit Terminal

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Transit Department

Report Number: TR-01-24

Wards Affected: 2

Date to Committee: November 4, 2024

Date to Council: November 19, 2024

Recommendation:

Direct the Director of Burlington Transit to proceed with relocating the Burlington Transit Bus Terminal from 430 John Street to the Burlington GO Station, located at 2101 Fairview Street; and

Direct the Manager of Realty Services to proceed in accordance with the instructions sought in confidential Appendix A to transit department report TR-01-24.

PURPOSE:

Vision to Focus Alignment:

- Designing and delivering complete communities
- Providing the best services and experiences
- Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
- Driving organizational performance

Executive Summary:

Transit terminals are important to transportation networks and public transit connectivity. They are places of passenger exchange to connect between bus and rail. A bus transit terminal should have a strong presence in the urban landscape and offer convenient travel options. They should provide accessible and adequate space for staff and

passengers, weather protection for waiting passengers, access to public washroom facilities (if possible), route and schedule information, encourage pedestrian travel, bicycle storage access, and encourage safe operations.

The city owns and operates one public transit terminal. The current transit terminal provides the following constraints:

- Facility age and condition;
- Safety concerns for staff and the public;
- Does not meet accessibility and city design standards; and
- Does not align to a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA).

Due to these constraints, staff investigated viable options for the terminal and are recommending relocating the Burlington Transit Terminal to the Burlington GO Station.

This move would provide the following benefits:

- Central urban location that is fixed to a MTSA;
- Safety enhancements for staff and passengers;
- Modern and maintained facility;
- Improves passenger and visitor experience; and
- Accessibility.

The relocation of the terminal will not affect the existing Burlington Transit route network.

Pending Council approval, next steps for the building and potential options will be presented in a future staff report.

Background and Discussion:

The Burlington Transit bus terminal was built in 1987. Over the past 37 years the building has only been maintained to stabilize the facility. The buildings major assets are original to the building. In addition, it doesn't align with accessibility and design standards.

Burlington Transit started to explore viable options for the Burlington Transit Terminal and approached the City's Realty Services to begin negotiations with Metrolinx. Details of the lease agreement are provided within Appendix A – Confidential Real Estate Matter.

This move promotes the ability for Burlington Transit to increase and improve its ability to provide in-person passenger assistance and interactions by 120%. There are eight Burlington Transit routes that connect at the Burlington GO Station, in comparison to four routes that connect at John Street. Based on information provided by Metrolinx,

over the past year (Sept. 2023 to Aug. 2024) Burlington GO Station had 1.7M passengers (boarding and alighting) using GO Transit. It is anticipated that this number will continue to increase with community growth and service expansion plans.

There are several benefits to housing the Burlington Transit Terminal within the Burlington GO Station, which include:

- Alignment within a MTSA;
- Centrally located on the main service level of the Burlington GO Station;
- Provides secure bike parking;
- Aesthetically pleasing and accessible facility;
- Public WIFI is available to passengers;
- Emergency backup power; and
- Provides staff security and safety enhancements.

There will be no changes to the existing four bus routes or bus shelters on John Street. These routes will continue to provide service in the downtown area and connections with Hamilton (HSR) service.

Strategy/process/risk

Burlington Digital Services (BDS) has been working with the Metrolinx technology team to ensure that the city can establish a separate and secure city network connection, install city-owned computer hardware, and point of sale system at the Burlington GO Station. Both parties have confirmed that the city will be able to have a separate and secure server location, network connection and computer hardware. All requirements have been readied and work will start with Council's approval to relocate.

PRESTO physical cards are readily available across the city and can be bought online, at any Shoppers Drug Mart or at a transit terminal. PRESTO is available with PRESTO contactless (debit and credit cards) and Mobile Wallet (Google and Apple). Customers can load funds to their PRESTO card using the PRESTO mobile app. Furthermore, customers have the option to pay a cash fare.

Options Considered

The preferred option is to relocate the Burlington Transit Terminal to the Burlington GO Station. There are many realized benefits, operational efficiencies, capital savings, increased customer service interactions, alignment with city goals, strategic plans, and planned community growth. The plan is for the move to take place in Q1 2025 to allow for adequate planning and communication.

The other options considered are as follows:

- Do Nothing (status quo): The John Street transit facility is 37 years old and does not meet accessibility or city design standards. Should Council decide not to

support the relocation of the Burlington Transit Terminal, it will require increased operating and capital funding to address concerns and the facility condition.

- **Renovate/Rebuild:** This option was considered and discussed with the city's facility group. A full evaluation and review of the bus terminal functional design would be required. Furthermore, to allow for any major construction/renovation, a temporary Transit Terminal location would be needed. Any cost implications for this option would be provided to Council in a separate report.

Financial Matters:

Capital Budget (2025 – 2034)

Over the next 10 years, there is a total of \$470,600 proposed capital funding to replace major assets, including windows, doors, roof, washroom fixtures, interior finishes, and sanitary site infrastructure. The 2025 proposed capital funding of \$5,000 would be redirected to fund other city facility needs. Future capital budget needs (2026-2034) would no longer be included in the capital budget forecast.

Operating Budget 2025

There is a net \$0 impact on the operating budget. There will be savings realized by eliminating contracted services and utilities that are currently provided at the Burlington Transit Terminal. The offset of these savings will fund the lease.

One-Time Funding

It is expected that there will be \$30,000 required in one-time funding. This funding is needed for initial customer service office fit-up, staff lockers, and wayfinding signage throughout the facility. Staff are recommending that this one-time need be funded from prior approved capital budget. There is approximately \$50,000 in available funding that can be distributed to fund these one-time costs. Any remaining prior approved funds will be reallocated to a city's reserve fund for future facility needs.

Total Financial Impact

- Capital budget: \$5,000 in 2025 capital funding would be redirected to other facility renewal needs.
- Operating budget: Net impact \$0
- One-time budget: \$30,000 from prior approved capital funding.

Source of Funding

Prior approved capital.

Other Resource Impacts

n/a

Climate Implications:

Increasing public transit usage over single-occupancy vehicle trips will contribute to reducing local CO2 emissions, in alignment with the City of Burlington's Climate Action Plan. Enhancing the convenience of public transit is key to encouraging individuals to choose transit as their travel option. Additionally, decommissioning the stand-alone downtown terminal and utilizing existing vacant space with the Burlington GO Station facility would help reduce the City's corporate carbon footprint.

Engagement Matters:

Burlington Transit has engaged with Metrolinx, other city departments and the Integrated Transportation Advisory Committee (ITAC).

Burlington Transit is working with Corporate Communications and Engagement to ensure the community is informed of the relocation. This will include information on the City's website, social media channels, John Street Transit Terminal signage, other city facilities, interior banner signage on buses and selected bus shelters across the city. Wayfinding signage will be installed at the Burlington GO Station to help direct passengers to the Burlington Transit Terminal location. There will be 35 wayfinding installations throughout the facility, bus loop and rail platforms.

Conclusion:

Relocating the Burlington Transit Terminal is an innovative strategy that supports future mobility planning goals and opportunities. The move positions Burlington Transit to respond to planned growth changes. It will enable Burlington Transit to continue to consider and make strategic decisions relating to community needs and service demand.

Furthermore, this move aligns with the province's objective to create sustainable transit services through the formation of strong partnerships and integration with existing services.

Burlington Transit is recommending that the Burlington Transit Terminal be relocated to the Burlington GO Station.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Jarvis

Manager, Transit Planning and Business Services

Appendices:

- A. Confidential Appendix A - Real Estate Matter

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Commissioner Legal and Legislative Services/City Solicitor.