

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ON THE HORIZON

Metrolinx Launches Wide-Ranging Consultation as First Step Towards Regional Transportation Plan

TORONTO (December 4, 2007) – The Greater Toronto Transportation Authority (GTTA) today kicked-off an ambitious and ground-breaking public engagement program to guide the future of transportation across the metropolitan region of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

The GTTA also announced it is conducting business under the name, Metrolinx, a name that emphasizes its role in linking people to places across the region.

“Today we are taking the first step in improving the choices people have when they need to go from place to place around the region,” said Rob MacIsaac, Chair of Metrolinx. “Less than a year from now, the people of this region will be presented with a comprehensive plan for a coordinated, seamless, sustainable transportation system.”

MacIsaac was joined by the Minister of Transportation Jim Bradley.

“Transportation is a vital part of Ontario’s quality of life. It impacts our economy, our environment, and – most importantly – the time we can spend with our families and friends,” Bradley said. “The Government of Ontario created an agency to develop a Regional Transportation Plan for this region and we are delighted to see it taking shape so quickly.”

Central to the development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) will be an extensive consultation process, which began today with the launch of an interactive website at www.metrolinx.com. A series of Green Papers will help guide the discussions.

“This is a chance to have a say on transportation choices in the future. We want people from across the region – from Hamilton to Durham and from Toronto to York – to participate. If it makes transportation better, we want to hear about it,” MacIsaac said.

The first Green Paper, released today, focuses on transportation trends and outlooks for the region. Subsequent discussion papers will deal with mobility hubs, active transportation, transportation demand management, moving goods and delivering services, highways and roads, and transit. Based on the feedback, these will evolve into White Papers and a Draft RTP, which will be the focus of another major consultation initiative next spring. Again, the feedback will be considered, and the final RTP will be released in the fall of 2008.

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“Throughout this process, we will always keep the transportation customer in mind,” MacIsaac said. “Whether you are a transit rider, driver, cyclist, pedestrian, or shipper, our aim is to ensure a transportation system that is timely, convenient and affordable.”

MacIsaac also announced the appointment of a number of community leaders from across the GTHA metropolitan region to the Board’s blue-ribbon Advisory Committee. The committee, which will be chaired by Hamilton entrepreneur and community advocate Mark Chamberlain, will assist the Metrolinx Board in developing a series of discussion papers that will form the basis for the Regional Transportation Plan. (See Backgrounder).

“Metrolinx better reflects our mandate to provide effective transportation links throughout the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area,” MacIsaac said. “With the help of leaders across the region, we are creating an organization that will be top-of-mind to people because of the difference we are making in their lives.”

Metrolinx is a Crown Agency of the Government of Ontario, operating within the legislative framework of the *Greater Toronto Transportation Authority Act, 2006* and the provincial Growth Plan.

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