

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **METROLINX SEEKS INPUT ON ISSUES RELATED TO COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION AND OVERALL DEMAND**

#### **Fourth and fifth Green Papers issued in development of Regional Transportation Plan**

TORONTO (February 22, 2008) – Metrolinx is again inviting the public and stakeholders to provide ideas, insights and suggestions on two specific issues, as part of a process to create a better transportation system for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. Metrolinx today issued two more Green Papers, focusing on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Moving Goods and Delivering Services.

Both Green Papers have been posted for public review and comment on Metrolinx’s interactive consultation website at <http://metrolinx-consult.limehouse.com/portal>. Metrolinx staff will be meeting broadly with stakeholder organizations to gather further input for a comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan.

“These Green Papers focus on particular components of our transportation system, and while we want to gather ideas for each component, we also need people thinking about how they fit together,” said Metrolinx Chair Rob MacIsaac. “We are trying to accomplish a lot in a very short period of time, so that people can reap the benefits of an improved transportation system, so it’s important to comment on the papers as soon as they’re available.”

Green Paper #4 sets out concepts and questions around Transportation Demand Management (TDM) – efforts to influence when, why and how people make their travel decisions.

“Improving our transportation system will require increasing the supply of transportation options, but supply is only part of the equation. We need to address demand as well,” MacIsaac said. “If we have better transportation choices to offer, people will be able to *make* more informed choices. So we need to explore incentives, disincentives and other ways to make the best use of the whole system.”

The TDM Green Paper examines ideas such as on-line trip planners, integrated transit passes and road tolls as ways to influence travel behaviour. The Presto card is cited as an example of how technology can improve efficiency and convenience, by making it easier to transfer and faster to board buses and trains. Electronic displays on transit vehicles and real-time messages to mobile devices are other suggestions to give people more timely information – which helps them make travel decisions.

Green Paper #5, Moving Goods and Delivering Services, focuses on the commercial side of the transportation system, and finding the right balance for commercial and passenger traffic to co-exist in a limited space.

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“From an 18-wheeler to a delivery van to a bicycle courier, our economy relies on the transportation system to get the job done,” MacIsaac said. “However, we can’t let market demands alone affect our quality of life. Our challenge is to design a system that works for everyone.”

One of the ideas in the Moving Goods and Delivering Services paper is to rationalize the use of railway networks to concentrate freight on some tracks and passenger services on others (which would require considerably more infrastructure). The paper also suggests developing systems for private companies to pool and share information without compromising competitive discretion.

The release of these Green Papers is an important milestone in Metrolinx’s development of a Regional Transportation Plan. Looking ahead, Metrolinx will publish two more papers over the next few weeks focusing on Roads and Highways, and Transit. Based on feedback from the public and stakeholders, these papers will form the foundation for the next step of policy recommendations dubbed “White Papers” to be considered by the Metrolinx board of directors.

A Draft RTP will integrate the transportation policies formulated and approved by the Metrolinx board. This document will be published in late spring and will be available for comment by the public until early fall of 2008. The final RTP – a comprehensive strategy for a coordinated transportation system in the urban area encompassing the Cities of Hamilton and Toronto, and the Regional Municipalities of Peel, Durham, Halton and York – will be released in the fall of 2008.

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

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