

**Ministry of
Transportation**

Office of the Minister

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**Ministère des
Transports**

Bureau de la ministre

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November 17, 2021

107-2021-4846

Mr. Donald Wright
Chair of the Board of Directors
Metrolinx
Chair@metrolinx.com

Dear Mr. Wright:

As you begin planning for 2022-23, I am pleased to write to you in your capacity as Chair of the Metrolinx Board of Directors. Pursuant to the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out my expectations for Metrolinx for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Ontario's board-governed agencies are vital partners in ensuring the delivery of high-quality services to Ontarians. The work that you and your fellow board members undertake to establish the goals, objectives, and strategic direction for Metrolinx is crucial in the coordination, planning, financing, development and implementation of an integrated transit network. It is important that this direction is consistent with government priorities, the agency's mandate, key policies and directives and my directions, where appropriate. I thank you for your willingness to serve.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unique and profound challenges to all Ontarians. Metrolinx demonstrated remarkable leadership and resiliency in its response to COVID-19 by continuing to focus on providing a safe and secure journey while adjusting service levels to meet changing customer demand. This has supported short- and long-term economic recovery of the region.

Our government's primary focus is to protect every life and every job we possibly can. Without healthy people, we cannot have a healthy economy.

As part of the Government of Ontario, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of Ontarians by being efficient, effective, and providing value-for-money to taxpayers.

This includes:

Government Wide Initiatives:

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Operating within your agency's financial allocations
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation, innovative practices and/or improved program sustainability
- Complying with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization and Realty Interim Measures for agency office space
- Leveraging and meeting benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives
- Working with the ministry, where appropriate, to advance the Ontario Onwards Action Plan

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting
- Adhering to requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, accounting standards and practices, and the Public Service of Ontario Act ethical framework, and responding to audit findings, where applicable
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability

3. Risk Management

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of risks, including planning for and responding to health and other emergencies, including but not limited to COVID-19
- Developing a continuity of operations plan that identifies time-critical/essential services and personnel

4. Workforce Management

- Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery
- Modernizing and redeploying resources to priority areas when or where they are needed

5. Data Collection

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information-sharing and reporting, including by leveraging available or new data solutions to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery
- Supporting transparency and privacy requirements of data work and data sharing with the ministry, as appropriate

6. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization or digital modernization strategies for online service delivery and continuing to meet and exceed customer service standards through the transition

- Adopting digital approaches, such as user research, agile development and product management

7. Diversity and Inclusion

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives, promoting an inclusive, accessible and diverse workplace
- Demonstrating leadership of an inclusive environment free of harassment
- Adopting a robust engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making

8. COVID-19 Recovery

- Identifying and pursuing service delivery methods (digital or other) that have evolved since the start of COVID-19
- Supporting the recovery efforts from COVID-19

As the province continues to protect the health and safety of Ontarians, while focusing on rebuilding the economy, Metrolinx will have a critical role in supporting government efforts to improve services, ensuring taxpayer dollars are invested responsibly and providing value-for-money to Ontarians. Metrolinx will continue to provide public access to safe and reliable transit services across the region.

As we proceed forward, the focus of the agency will be targeted towards support of government-wide initiatives, and in delivery of transportation specific deliverables. In addition to the government-wide priorities, I expect Metrolinx to focus on:

Transportation Specific Initiatives:

1. Supporting Economic Recovery Including COVID-19 Pandemic Response Efforts

- Continuing to work with the provincial government to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and to inform short- and long-term economic recovery efforts, including those to:
 - ensure safe transit operations to rebuild customer confidence and attract customers back to services
 - improve customer convenience and service reliability, and address overcrowding
 - ensure and promote the safety of public transit systems by supporting the coordinated procurement of new safety materials, as required
 - drive service sustainability through innovation in route planning and technology
- Continuing to review its internal and service operations to identify and pursue cost savings and efficiencies, while maintaining current and planned service levels
- Leveraging partnerships, programs and technology to meet new travel demands, enhance the customer experience and build an even stronger regional transportation system for the future
- Continuing to work with the provincial government to explore potential partnerships for intercommunity bus service delivery, as a way to enhance province-wide intercommunity bus service

2. Advancing Ontario's New Subway Transit Plan and Continuing the Delivery of Metrolinx Priority Rapid Transit Project

- Continuing to act as the "Project Sponsor" for the projects prescribed as priority transit projects under the Building Transit Faster Act, 2020 (BTFA), by working with Infrastructure Ontario (IO) and municipal partners in the City of Toronto, York Region, and Peel Region to implement the projects on an accelerated basis. The priority transit projects include projects identified in Ontario's New Subway Transit Plan for the GTA, specifically the Ontario Line, the Yonge North Subway Extension, the three-stop Scarborough Subway Extension and the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension. This includes the continued implementation of the BTFA measures delegated to Metrolinx to expedite the planning, design and construction process for the priority transit projects and continuing planning work related to the Sheppard Subway Extension.
- Providing technical support to IO for that agency's lead responsibility for the advancement of Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) opportunities
- With IO and respective municipalities, continuing to advance the delivery of other provincial regional rapid transit projects in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), including the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit (LRT), the Finch West LRT and the Hurontario LRT, including the advancement of TOC opportunities
- Working to advance the Hamilton LRT project in the City of Hamilton from the \$1.7-billion provincial capital commitment for construction of the project
- Continuing to implement strategies to support local businesses, residents and Indigenous communities impacted by the delivery of Metrolinx-led transit projects, including the development of mitigation options

3. Expanding and Enhancing GO Transit Service

- Continuing to move forward with planning, enabling works and/or critical procurements, including additional infrastructure works along corridors and at stations, to support the transformation of the GO Transit rail network into a comprehensive, all-day rapid transit network
- Continuing to work with freight rail partners to achieve further GO rail service options to Kitchener, Niagara and Milton, and advance the planning and delivery of the GO rail extension to Bowmanville
- Providing technical support to IO for that agency's lead responsibility for the advancement of Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) opportunities
- Maintaining high quality GO Transit and Union Pearson Express service while continuing to monitor and adjust GO Transit's rail and bus services to ensure customers receive the service they need while managing costs

4. Supporting Government Initiatives to Optimize Transit Investments and Regional Transit Planning

- Continuing to support policy work being led by the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to advance fare and service integration in the GGH and the potential for micro-transit solutions, where appropriate.

As part of this support, working with municipalities and municipal transit agencies both individually and as part of regional working group forums. Prioritizing opportunities that enable greater fare and service integration, including system improvements to PRESTO and improved service integration between the GO network and local networks.

- Continuing the planning and preliminary design work, in collaboration with municipalities and municipal transit agencies, and Indigenous communities as appropriate, for bus rapid transit (BRT) projects currently underway
- Continuing to work with MTO to complete the multimodal Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) Transportation Plan for 2051, including providing transit-related technical support, and sharing information with the ministry from Metrolinx's ongoing transit planning work, and participating in the ministry's engagement with municipalities and Indigenous communities on the plan [TBC pending timing of GGH plan release, currently planned for October 2021]
- Working with MTO to determine the appropriate timing and scope of any proposed changes or updates to the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to conform with the 2051 GGH Transportation Plan and reflect government-approved transportation priorities for the region. The scope and timing of any proposed changes would be presented to the Minister of Transportation for review and approval.
- In consultation with MTO, completing the Airport Area Transportation Study Update with the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA), and work with the ministry to plan for and prioritize study recommendations
- Working in a collaborative partnership with MTO to support the actions outlined in Connecting the Southwest: A draft transportation plan for southwestern Ontario, by identifying opportunities, working with VIA Rail and freight operators, to enhance passenger rail train speeds and service levels on existing railway corridors.
- Developing an updated Business Case with support from the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission (ONTC) and MTO, as part of conducting feasibility work to advance the case for Northeastern Passenger Rail service between Toronto, North Bay and Timmins or Cochrane
- In consultation with MTO, continuing to deliver PRESTO improvements through system enhancements, implementing new forms of payments, exploring partnership opportunities and continuing to work with municipalities to roll out new PRESTO devices
- Working with municipalities, transportation companies and agencies, and other partners to develop trip planning tools
- Supporting the province to improve access, and security outcomes of vulnerable transit users within the Metrolinx transit network through strategies with a particular focus on the broad government priorities around accessibility, Anti-Black Racism and improving outcomes for Indigenous peoples

5. Building a Sustainable and Future Ready Transportation System

- Working with MTO and other partners to investigate opportunities for the development and effective implementation of Mobility as a Service (MaaS), using data, information and technology to bring transportation options to users so they can plan, book and pay for trips across multiple services and modes of travel through a single online platform.
- Working with MTO and other partners to prepare for the adoption of emerging technologies, such as electric, connected and automated vehicles
- Continuing to incorporate sustainability efforts into corporate practices and initiatives, including the development of a sustainability strategy that explores opportunities to reduce greenhouse emissions and increase uptake of low carbon vehicles
- Working with MTO and other partners to develop first-mile/last-mile technologies and solutions, including through automated shuttle and other mobility pilots, and connections for active transportation users through safe, accessible and secure active transportation access to GO facilities

6. Deliver Partnership and Non-Fare Revenue Initiatives

- Continuing to support the work of the provincial Value Creation Task Force to identify and review innovative opportunities to generate non-fare revenues
- Continuing to increase non-fare revenue through the expansion and transformation of your advertising network by way of digital infrastructure, entering partnerships and commercialization of key customer amenities

7. Ensuring Safety

- Continuing to work to improve safety across all Metrolinx services, including by continuing efforts around worker safety, railway level crossing risk assessments and improvements, operational safety investigations, and broader work to advance rail safety
- Working with the ministry and Transport Canada on a new Memorandum of Understanding on the inspection framework for Metrolinx transit infrastructure and operations
- Continuing to work with the ministry to support the ongoing review of provincial rail safety, and support, as necessary, the planning and implementation of changes to strengthen rail safety and oversight across the province
- Continuing to advance the Metrolinx Cybersecurity Risk Management Program
- Taking into account the safety of Indigenous women, girls and other marginalized groups in planning, designing and delivering transportation services and taking actions to combat sexual exploitation and human trafficking (e.g. training of front-line employees, public awareness, reporting policies), in accordance with the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Ontario's Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy

- Taking into account the needs of, vulnerable and underserved populations, including racialized people, Indigenous people, and people with disabilities in the planning, design and delivery of safe and accessible transportation services

Through these measures, we can continue to ensure that Metrolinx is continuing to provide leadership in the coordination, planning, financing, development and implementation of an integrated transit network. We are confident that the people of Ontario are going to unleash the economic growth that is necessary for job creation, prosperity and a stronger province.

I thank you and your fellow board members for your continued support, and your valuable contributions. Should you have any questions/concerns, please feel free to contact Deputy LeBlanc (Laurie.LeBlanc@ontario.ca).

Sincerely,



Caroline Mulroney
Minister of Transportation

- c. Ian Freeman, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation
James Nowlan, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation
Laurie LeBlanc, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation
Phil Verster, President & Chief Executive Officer, Metrolinx
Ramneet Aujla, Chief Administrative Officer, Ministry of Transportation
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