

MANAGEMENT REPORT TO METROLINX

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|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Report Title:</b>         | CEO Monthly Report |                          |                            |                           |   |
| <b>Report Number:</b>        | CEO 08-001         | <b>Date to Board:</b>    | Jan 25, 2008               | <b>Date to Committee:</b> | N/A   |
| <b>Report To:</b>            | BOARD              |                          |                            |                           |   |
| <b>Report Referred From:</b> | N/A                |                          |                            |                           |   |
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| <b>Item Class:</b>           | In Camera          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Decision                   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**RECOMMENDATION:**

RESOLVED:

**THAT** CEO 08-001 Monthly Report be received for information.

**ISSUE:**

1. Organizational Design and Staffing Strategy
2. Developing Stakeholder Relationships
3. Interregional Bus Terminal in the Union Station Precinct
4. Provincial Environmental Assessment Process for Transit Projects
5. Other Business

## **1. Organizational Design and Staffing Strategy**

At its September 2007 meeting, the Board approved the organizational structure for Metrolinx and authorized engaging an executive recruitment firm to assist in recruiting executives to manage the business units of Metrolinx.

The candidate selection process was completed and approved by the Human Resources Committee on December 20, 2007 pursuant to the Board's delegated authority to the committee. Chair Maclsaac will introduce the incumbents in the four General Manager positions to the Board at the commencement of its January 25 meeting.

## **2. Developing Stakeholder Relationships**

Metrolinx staff continues to participate in a growing range of discussions with stakeholders that share our goal of a seamless, integrated metropolitan transportation system. Highlights from our recent activities include:

- The Chair and CEO held an inaugural meeting of the Advisory Committee on November 27, 2007 in support of the Regional Transportation Plan consultation process.
- Metrolinx launched its public consultation process for the Regional Transportation Plan on December 4, 2007 at a sold-out luncheon hosted by the CUI. The Minister of Transportation attended as a keynote speaker and board members at the Launch event included Metrolinx's Chair Robert Maclsaac, Vice-Chair Peter Smith, and Metrolinx Board Directors Paul Bedford, Bill Fisch and Adam Giambone. Our new name and our new web site and consultation site were also launched the same day. There were a total of 873,000 hits and 30,000 visitors to the web site in the first month, between December 4, 2007 and January 4, 2008.
- The CEO accepted an invitation to participate in Mississauga's "Conversation about our Future Mississauga", as a member of the Community Leader Advisory Group. Involvement includes attendance at a Visioning Symposium on Friday February 1 and Saturday February 2, 2008.
- The CEO participated as a panel member for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Metropolitan Review Series, Regional Horizontal Governance Panel held at Toronto City Hall on December 4, 2007. Metrolinx General Manager John Howe also participated as a panel member for this same event for the Panel for Infrastructure and Transportation.
- The CEO spoke at the Institute for Public Administration's National Leadership Summit at a panel session, with David Livingston of Infrastructure Ontario, on the topic of Partnerships – Building Coalitions To Deliver Results, held on December 7, 2007.

- The Chair and CEO accepted an invitation to attend a Board of Trade breakfast featuring Minister Cannon speaking on Canada's historic infrastructure plan, held December 7, 2007.
- The CEO and General Manager John Howe met with senior officials from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade on December 17, 2007 to discuss opportunities to meet with GTHA auto industry stakeholders in early 2008, in order to outline Metrolinx's mandate and the Regional Transportation Plan process.
- On December 12, 2007 the Chair and CEO spoke with senior officials from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Transportation Department to share information and advice regarding Metrolinx's mandate, role and current consultations.
- CEO Michael Fenn and GM John Howe, together with MTO ADM David O'Toole held useful discussions with senior officials of the Federal Department of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities on December 18, 2007 to explore issues of mutual interest, including: federal participation in the Metrolinx RTP and AFP workplan; the National Transit Strategy; potential shared investment priorities in the GTHA; and, the potential benefits of the proposed collaboration among Canada's three largest metropolitan transportation authorities (AMT in Montreal, TransLink in Greater Vancouver, and Metrolinx).

### **3. Interregional Bus Terminal in the Toronto Union Station Precinct**

Following the Board's August 24, 2007 direction for a report-back on the viability of a proposed inter-regional bus terminal at 90 Harbour Street in the Toronto Union Station precinct, Metrolinx and its consultant have been in the process of identifying concepts for evaluation so that a best course of action recommendation can be made to the Board in February, 2008.

The retained consultant, along with Metrolinx staff, have been actively engaging key stakeholders including private-sector motor coach carriers, GO Transit, City of Toronto staff (including Planning, Transportation, and TTC), the Province of Ontario, Transport Canada, and Waterfront Toronto.

#### *Opportunity for a Bus Terminal Adjacent to Toronto Union Station and Expanded Project Scope:*

As the analysis of the transportation market and policy environment proceeded with respect to the Toronto Coach Terminal (Bay & Dundas) and 90 Harbour Street sites, it became evident there was an opportunity for an integrated bus terminal as part of a larger mixed-use development at the current GO Transit bus terminal site. As a result the consultant and Metrolinx staff expanded their scope of work to pursue a joint-venture concept that would involve the construction of a mixed-use office and two-level bus terminal in conjunction with Public Works Canada, and their heritage Federal Customs Building at 1 Front Street West.

The concept for 1 Front Street West currently being developed would protect and celebrate the rear façade of the heritage building with an atrium constructed above a two-level bus terminal that will improve upon GO Transit's current accommodations and integrate private-carrier coaches on this site immediately adjacent to Union Station. The concept also includes significant office space to achieve highest and best use at the site. As the concept evolves it will integrate fully with the PATH network and Union Station.

*Status:*

The consultant and Metrolinx staff are currently working with architects and engineers to develop basic design concepts for both the 90 Harbour and 1 Front Street West sites which will be satisfactory from the both the perspectives of planning, policy and coach-operator stakeholders. These concepts will then be roughly costed, and the consultant's report will analyze how Metrolinx should proceed, taking into account both a business case and transportation policy analysis.

Metrolinx staff and its consultant will be presenting a report to the Board in a February meeting with recommendations for a preferred site and concept for a bus terminal in the Union Station precinct and an appropriate course of action.

#### **4. Provincial Environmental Assessment Process for Transit Projects**

James O'Mara, Metrolinx's Executive Lead on environmental issues has now completed an extensive round of consultation on environmental assessment (EA) requirements for municipal transit projects (see Board Report CEO 07-001, dated November 23, 2007). One of the conclusions of that consultation is that the recent inclusion of the Transit Chapter in the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment has streamlined the approval process for transit projects subject to the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA). But it is equally clear from experiences which came to light during the consultation that the provincial environmental assessment (EA) process for transit projects can take an excessive amount of time.

It is also likely that there is both duplication and overlap between EA and other planning processes. It has been strongly suggested that when there are delays associated with EA, the benefits of transit projects are also delayed, usually at the cost of considerable inconvenience and potentially significant financial losses to the community. In addition, it has also been submitted that policy objectives in areas related to public transit, such reducing single-occupant vehicle emissions to improve air quality, easing gridlock and offering more choices for mobility within the region, can be put at risk.

Some of the comments arising from the consultation on EA appear to be contradictory.

One perspective contends that there is little in the EAA which is inherently or intentionally aimed at creating delay and confusion. Protecting the environment and encouraging open decision making on matters which have the potential to affect the environment is strongly supported. The connection between a sustainable environment and sound EA planning was seen among all of those who were consulted on transit as a positive benefit. At the same time, there is an equally strong view on the need for major change in EA and a new alignment in the planning framework for transit projects.

The consultation threw light on a number of opportunities to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and economy of the EA process for transit projects. The opportunities can be distilled into a smaller range of options which would enhance processes without compromising the underlying principles of EA and its environmental protection outcomes. The opportunities involve a range of mutually reinforcing initiatives which can be grouped under three headings:

1. A better planning framework for transit projects and subsequent decision making processes which involve:
  - Clearly establishing transit within a framework for environmental sustainability which is aimed at improving the quality of life through better environmental outcomes;
  - Providing appropriate linkages to other statutory public planning processes; and
  - Relying more heavily than the present on local knowledge and decision making processes.
2. A tighter focus on environmental protection which includes:
  - Focusing on what EA does best which is to promote good planning outcomes by encouraging state of the art practices to create environmental benefits and mitigate adverse impacts;
  - Coordinating EA activities much more fully than is currently the practice by relying on other planning processes which share environmental planning objectives; and
  - Recognizing that the current Part II Order process needs to change significantly so that it concentrates efforts on those matters which are clearly in the provincial interest and involve provincial responsibility for environmental protection.
3. The continuing development of pragmatic approaches to EA including:
  - Identifying and promoting best practices for practitioners of EA and other planning activities;
  - Preparing guidance material for the public to promote understanding and to clearly spell out what can and what cannot be achieved under EA; and

- Focusing to a much greater degree than the present on new approaches to consultation and resolving issues and concerns outside of the formal EA process.

There is also disagreement on the scope and urgency of any EA reform.

Many of the comments gathered during this consultation appeared to suggest that streamlining EA for transit projects can be accomplished through gradual change. Promoting best practices, the use of already available tools, and education and outreach are the hallmarks of a measured, almost business-as-usual approach.

Metrolinx staff strongly disagrees with that viewpoint and the majority of those heard during the consultation supports our opinion.

The consultation has pointed to the need for a more fundamental change. An incremental approach through new policies is not seen as being adequate to the urgent need to promote and develop transit projects effectively, efficiently, and economically. There is an interest in and an appetite for transformational measures to improve how the requirements of the EAA for transit projects are fulfilled. Increasing the reliance on public debate and decisions in other planning processes and focusing on provincial areas of responsibility represent two possible approaches to making major changes in fulfilling the requirements of the EAA. Regulatory and potentially legislative changes are seen as being both desirable and necessary so that planning processes can be rationalized and EA can be enhanced.

The Board's invitation for the Minister of the Environment, the Honourable John Gerretsen, to meet with the Metrolinx Board, is a timely starting point to our collective efforts to implement a process that meets all environmental and sustainability objectives but also ensures that we can achieve the Ontario Premier's commitment to a six-month cycle time for transit projects.

## **5. Other Business**

### *Smart Commute Transition:*

The Smart Commute Initiative transition from its home base with York Region and its partner municipalities began in December 2007. The three staff members of the Smart Commute Association were relocated to Metrolinx headquarters in early December and became Metrolinx employees. Assumption of operational expenditures for the group took place January 1, 2008. Conveyance of all other Smart Commute Association assets and liabilities from York Region to Metrolinx is in progress, including ownership over the Smart Commute official mark. All transition items are expected to be completed by February 2008. Operational funding for local Smart Commute transportation management associations, that replaces Transport Canada's contribution, is in negotiation for the remainder of fiscal year 2007-08. My thanks to Transition Director Kim Lambert and the staff of York Region and Smart Commute for making this a model of a good transition process.

*Transit Procurement Initiative Transition:*

Staff from the Ministry and Metrolinx will be meeting later in January 2008 to continue the discussion on a transition plan for the Transit Procurement Initiative.

**Respectfully submitted to the Board,**



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W. Michael Fenn, Chief Executive Officer

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