

**To:** Metrolinx Board of Directors  
**From:** Karla Avis-Birch, *Chief Planning Officer (A)*  
**Date:** June 24, 2021  
**Re:** **Planning & Development Quarterly Report**

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## Highlights

- **Important milestone for the Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project** – the Durham Region Committee of the Whole supported the preferred technical option to allow Metrolinx to start the Transit Project Approval Process (TPAP) environmental assessment and detailed design. Through successful engagement efforts supported by our communications and community engagement teams, we made multiple refinements to the preliminary design, specifically in downtown Whitby which had been identified as a ‘pinch-point’ due to physical space constraints, in order to garner support from the larger community.
- **Stakeholder engagement** is a cornerstone to ensuring we bring value to the communities we serve, and that our projects are delivered as planned. In particular, the partnerships we have with municipalities enable growth and integration of the transit network across the region. A governance framework for our engagement with municipalities has been established and is designed to streamline required interfaces and resolve issues.
  - Our framework for engagement with the City of Toronto is most mature, and calibrated to the complex nature of the various departments that help to support project delivery in the City of Toronto
  - Other governance structures in place include those with Durham Region, York Region, City of Mississauga, and City of Brampton, with plans to expand to Hamilton, Niagara Region and others.
- **Workplace transformation** is a medium-term plan that optimizes the office space footprint to meet provincial guidance provided to public agencies as well as to leverage opportunities for cost savings. In partnership with Human Resources, the plan to decentralize employees will provide “home” office spaces best suited for their work function (i.e. office workers vs frontline staff vs facility works vs field/construction staff).
  - An inventory of unused space in Metrolinx regional facilities is underway to assess the options available
  - In partnership with HR, I&IT and Health and Safety, the current stage of workplace transformation is preparing for a tentative return to the workplace for office-based employees (as guided by provincial direction), which includes installation of lockers in preparation for shared desks, a desk reservation system, and guidance for teams on new ways of working.

Respectfully submitted.

**Karla Avis-Birch**  
*Chief Planning Officer (A)*