

To: Metrolinx Board of Directors
From: Karla Avis-Birch, Chief Planning Officer
Date: June 29, 2023
Re: Planning & Development (P&D) Quarterly Report

This report provides an update on recent activity and key milestones over the past quarter:

Metrolinx has commenced a partnership with AccessNow to provide accurate accessibility information to people with disabilities on our stations and services and to provide Metrolinx staff with the Accessibility 101 training series about accessibility and fostering a culture of disability allyship and awareness. AccessNow is a Canadian company that has created a web platform designed to be the go-to resource for accessibility information in the built environment and transit. The web platform provides accurate and trustworthy accessible information about our facilities to customer with disabilities for their trip planning before they leave home, and the verified badge for each facility signals that information shared is up-to-date and validated by AccessNow. The Accessibility 101 training series has been very well received and provides important information educating Metrolinx staff about accessibility with over 640 people attending live sessions and many others listening to the recordings.

Free hand-held maps are now available for customers and staff at Union Station, assisting customers in navigating Union Station and the surrounding area more easily. One side of the map provides an overview of the Union Station interior, including the Great Hall, York and Bay Concourse, the corresponding platforms, and walking directions to access the Union Station Bus Terminal. On the reverse side, a map highlights important downtown locations, such as tourist attractions, transit services, and retail destinations. These maps have been created by the Metrolinx Wayfinding team and will be regularly updated, both in print and online, to reflect any ongoing construction at the station, which will enhance the experience of any visitor to the station by providing helpful and up-to-date information.



The Concord Initial Business Case was published in April, which considers a potential station site on the Barrie Line where it crosses Highway 7. Delivery would be explored through the government's Transit Oriented Communities program. This site would support connections between GO rail and local and regional bus services, providing customers with improved access to jobs, housing, destinations, and attractions across the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The proposed site of the Highway 7/Concord GO Station is a potential multi-modal transit hub under the City of Vaughan's Concord GO Centre Secondary Plan. The GO station is planned to be located within a Major Transit Station Area with several existing and planned transit services, including the Barrie GO line, the VIVA Bus Rapid Transit line, the future 407 Transitway, and Metrolinx's GO Regional Bus Service.

As part of Metrolinx's commitment to continuous improvement and incorporating lessons learned, guidance surrounding the Role of Sponsor was launched on May 24, 2023, to support new and existing Metrolinx Sponsors in delivering the right project. The guidance outlines core accountabilities and responsibilities of Sponsors and when executed, it helps to ensure maximized benefits are realized through the delivery of capital projects by: setting requirements; ensuring appropriate budget is in place; managing stakeholder expectations and proactively supporting resolution of risks and issues that may impede progression of capital projects.

Work is set to begin to update the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), published in 2018, to reflect notable changes in planning context over the past few years including our expanded geographic mandate, updated government direction on housing and growth, and changes in travel behaviour. Through this initiative, we will extend the plan to 2051. By doing so, it will allow Metrolinx to: assess the progress made over the past five years; consider emerging trends; reaffirm our commitment to equity and Indigenous engagement; recommend prioritized actions for the next 5-10 years to connect communities; and lastly, to implement an integrated, sustainable regional transit network for all. This will be supported by new technical analysis and input from a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. An internal project launch workshop with teams across the organization is planned for later this month. External stakeholder and Indigenous engagement are planned for the summer and fall of this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Karla Avis-Birch
Chief Planning Officer