

**Ministry of  
Transportation**

Office of the Minister

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**Ministère des  
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107-2022-4086

November 3, 2022

Mr. Donald Wright  
Chair of the Board of Directors  
Metrolinx  
97 Front Street West, 2nd Floor  
Toronto ON M5J 1E6

Dear Mr. Wright:

I am pleased to share our government's 2023-24 priorities for Metrolinx.

As Chair, you play a vital role in helping Metrolinx achieve its mandate. It is important that your agency's goals, objectives and strategic direction continue to align with our government's priorities and direction.

Recognizing the significance of the largest regional transit investment in Ontario's history, I ask that Metrolinx continue to work with the Ministry of Transportation to ensure your organization and business objectives achieve the following priorities: operational excellence, successful delivery of capital projects and excellence in governance, accountability and transparency.

As a provincial agency, Metrolinx is expected to act in the best interests of the people of Ontario and ensure that they provide value for money to taxpayers. Metrolinx is also required to adhere to all applicable government policies and directives.

Per the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out my expectations for Metrolinx for 2023-24. These priorities include:

### **Transportation-Specific Initiatives**

#### **1. Operational Excellence in the Delivery of Efficient, Safe and Reliable Transit Services while Supporting Economic Recovery Efforts**

- Continuing to work with the provincial government to inform 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.

- Maintain customer satisfaction with high quality GO Transit and Union Pearson Express service.
- 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 internal and service operations to identify and pursue cost savings and efficiencies, to ensure customers receive quality and reliable services they need while managing costs.
- 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 between Metrolinx and the private sector for intercommunity bus service delivery, as a way to enhance access to and coordination of intercommunity bus service, including for Indigenous communities.
- Continuing to implement recruiting initiatives and programs to attract, develop and retain talent through effective staffing and succession management strategies that build a strong, diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Continuing to implement strategies and initiatives to foster an efficient high performing workforce while supporting staff health, safety and wellness to foster a positive corporate culture and work environment.
- Ensuring that safe operations, for customers and communities, remain the highest priority through the implementation of best practices, continuous improvement processes and compliance with applicable health and safety regulations, including applicable environmental safety regulations. This includes providing the ministry with regular updates on health and safety initiatives.
- Working with the ministry to develop the Metrolinx multi-year strategic/operational plans.

## **2. Excellence in Governance and Accountability**

- Ensuring that the agency adheres to all approval and review processes, as well as frameworks established between the agency and the ministry (e.g., business case process) to ensure early collaboration, timely submissions and alignment with established priorities.
- Providing regular updates and report-backs on progress in implementing the direction as set out in this Annual Letter of Direction and in other Letters of Direction, key initiatives and projects with accompanying performance measurement and evaluation as applicable.
- Continuing to implement a skills-based governance model to enhance agency governance, accountability, oversight and effective decision-making. This

includes regularly assessing the Board of Directors to identify skills, knowledge and experience gaps and opportunities, regularly updating the board's skills matrix and conducting succession planning to ensure continuity of operations.

- Submitting the Board's skills matrix and succession plan to the ministry for review on an annual basis or as requested.
- Continuing to conduct periodic reviews of the informational needs, as well as decision-making approaches, of the board and senior management and to report to the ministry on outcomes of these reviews.
- Working with the ministry to update the communications protocol between the ministry and agency, as required, to support collaboration, clarify roles and expectations and ensure compliance on public communications opportunities, including community and stakeholder engagement.
- Prioritizing asset management and reporting of the conditions of assets to the ministry as per Metrolinx's provincial obligations under the *Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015*.
- Continuing to provide the Audit, Finance & Risk Management Committee report (AFaRM) reports on Auditor General Activities and Action Plans, Internal Audit Activities Update and the agency's Internal Audit Plan.
- Continuing to provide risk register and management action plans (AFaRM report and/or similar report) quarterly or after the AFaRM committee report is tabled at the Metrolinx committee meeting.
- Continuing to improve alignment of Metrolinx's risk reporting at a project, portfolio and enterprise level and to different audiences (e.g., Office of the Chief Risk Officer (OCRO), Federal reporting requirements).
- Continuing to assess and develop appropriate action plans for key risks identified by TBS-OCRO (e.g., flood emergency, cybersecurity as well as inflation & supply chain related project delays).
- Continuing to inform the ministry about any planned or current agency-initiated reviews.

### **3. Continuing the Delivery of Metrolinx Priority Rapid Transit Projects**

- Continuing to act as the "Project Sponsor" for the priority transit projects in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) and working with Infrastructure Ontario (IO) and municipal partners including in the City of Toronto, York Region and the City of Hamilton to implement the projects on an accelerated basis. The priority transit projects include the Ontario Line, the Yonge North Subway Extension, the Scarborough Subway Extension, the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension and the Hamilton Light Rail Transit. This includes the continued implementation of the *Building Transit Faster Act, 2020* (BTFA), including the measures delegated to Metrolinx, and continuing to keep the ministry informed

on any arising issues and mitigations impacting schedule, budget and delivery and progress on the priority transit projects.

- Continuing to coordinate and collaborate with partner municipalities to successfully deliver the priority transit projects in the GTHA, as per the Preliminary Agreements signed with the City of Toronto and York Region and the Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Hamilton.
- Continuing to regularly report to the ministry on the implementation of the BTFA. This includes regular reporting on an immediate, monthly and quarterly basis, as directed by the ministry.
- Advancing planning work as part of an initial business case for the Sheppard Subway Extension that will provide options and alignment to connect the existing TTC's Line 4 subway to the future Scarborough Subway Extension.
- Advancing planning work for the proposed extension of the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension from Renforth Drive to Toronto's Pearson International Airport.
- Continuing to work with IO and respective municipalities 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 Hazel McCallion Line.
- Continuing to work closely with the ministry on development and implementation of the Community Benefits and Supports Program, including implementing hiring targets for apprentices and historically disadvantaged communities and equity seeking groups, targets for procurement from social enterprises and strategies to mitigate negative impacts of project construction and operations.
- Continuing to support the implementation of the Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) Program, including providing technical support to the Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI) and Infrastructure Ontario for their lead responsibilities for the advancement of Subway TOC opportunities, as well as working with MOI to identify and deliver GO/LRT TOC opportunities.

#### **4. 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 and VIA Rail, to achieve further GO rail service options and enhancing passenger rail train speeds and service levels on existing railway corridors to Kitchener, Niagara, London and Milton, and advance the planning and delivery of the GO rail extension to Bowmanville.

#### **5. 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 regional transportation area and the potential for on-demand 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, as well as with other stakeholders and the public, to obtain input and implement initiatives.
- 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 including the Durham-Scarborough BRT, Dundas BRT and Brampton Queen Street BRT.
- Continuing to work with MTO to implement the 2051 regional transit network identified in *Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, released in March 2022. This will include ongoing work to analyze the feasibility of two new conceptual cross-regional rapid transit connections identified in the plan: an east-west higher order transit line between Burlington and Oshawa, north of Toronto, and a transit loop that connects the Ontario Line to new major transit hubs.
- Working with MTO to determine the appropriate timing and scope of any proposed changes or updates to the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan to conform with *Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* 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.
- Working with MTO to identify potential new business cases and planning work prior to undertaking to confirm alignment with provincial priorities as well as available resources.
- Working with MTO to plan for and prioritize recommendations from the Airport Area Transportation Study Update and ensure alignment with implementation of the Connecting the GGH transportation plan.
- Working in a collaborative partnership with MTO to support actions outlined in *Connecting the East: A draft transportation plan for eastern Ontario* by exploring opportunities, such as a technical assessment or pilot program, for increased passenger rail service to better connect municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe with the eastern region.
- Continuing to support the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission (ONTC) in advancing Northeastern Passenger Rail service between Toronto and Timmins, with a rail connection to Cochrane, with a target in-service date of the mid-2020s.

- In consultation with MTO, continuing to deliver PRESTO modernization, 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.
- Continuing to improve access and security outcomes of vulnerable transit users within the Metrolinx transit network (including vehicles, stations, customer service, communications, online services, technology, PRESTO, etc.) through strategies with a particular focus on the broad government priorities around accessibility, Anti-Black Racism and improving outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

## **6. 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.
- Continuing to pilot emerging transportation technologies to identify use cases that support public transit.
- Continuing to commit to environmental, social and governance corporate practices and initiatives through the development of an Environmental, Social and Governance Strategy and framework that establishes goals and performance measures related to these three categories.
- As part of the agency's risk management process, strategically planning for and responding to future environmental conditions to ensure transportation options are sustainable and resilient to a changing climate.
- Continuing to explore opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase uptake of low carbon vehicles and enhance climate resiliency of transportation infrastructure. This includes developing business cases and continuing to pilot and deploy low carbon vehicles for their revenue and non-revenue fleets.
- Working with MTO and other partners to develop first-mile/last-mile technologies and solutions, including through automated shuttle and other mobility pilots, on-demand transit services, as well as connections for active transportation and micro mobility users through safe, accessible and secure active transportation access to GO facilities. This includes working with MTO on targeted first-mile last-mile approaches to optimize priority transit projects and GO expansion as these come online.
- Working to fulfill the Duty to Consult with Indigenous communities when Metrolinx initiatives have the potential to adversely impact Aboriginal and treaty rights.

## **7. Delivering Partnership and Non-Fare Revenue Initiatives**

- Continuing to identify and review innovative opportunities to generate non-fare revenues and provide information to the ministry on potential opportunities as required.
- 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.

## **8. Ensuring Safety**

- Continuing to work to improve safety across all Metrolinx services 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 the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the inspection framework for Metrolinx and adhering and responding to all Transport Canada inspection reports and audit findings.
- Continuing to work with the ministry to support the ongoing review of provincial rail safety, including, as necessary, the planning and implementation of changes to strengthen rail safety and oversight across the province.
- Working with the ministry to modernize all safety management systems related to bus and rail operations to ensure that they meet applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Continuing to advance the Metrolinx Cybersecurity Risk Management program.
- Taking into account the safety of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA people (particularly those living in rural, remote and northern communities) 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. This includes engagement with Indigenous communities and anti-human trafficking organizations.
- Taking into account the needs of vulnerable and underserved populations, including women, 2SLGBTQQIA people, racialized people, Indigenous communities and people and people with disabilities in the planning, design and delivery of safe, equitable and accessible transportation services. This includes engagement with these populations to best serve their needs.
- Working internally and with MTO to ensure that there is a strong focus on driver and vehicle safety in Metrolinx's program mandate and delivery.

I am also sharing several government-wide priorities.

## **Government-Wide Initiatives**

### **1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management**

- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation through partnerships, where appropriate.
- Identifying efficiencies and savings through innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
- Operating within the agency's financial allocations.
- Complying with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization, including contract harmonization for planned and pending procurements, accounting practices and realty interim measures for agency office space.
- Leveraging and meeting benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives.

### **2. Transparency and Accountability**

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhering to accounting standards and practices, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.

### **3. Risk Management**

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of agency risks, including COVID-19 impacts and any future emergency risks.

### **4. Workforce Management**

- Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery, including redeploying resources to priority areas, where needed.
- Supporting the implementation of the Community Jobs Initiative (CJI) by identifying opportunities to relocate new or existing agencies to lower cost communities.

### **5. Diversity and Inclusion**

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives by promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.
- Adopting an inclusive engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

### **6. Data Collection**



- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Increasing data sharing with Supply Ontario when applicable regarding procurement spending and planning, contract arrangements and vendor relations to support data-driven decision-making.

## 7. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization for online service delivery to ensure customer service standards are met.
- Using a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery in all situations, including pursuing delivery methods that have evolved since COVID-19.

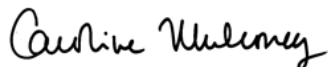
These are the government-wide commitments for board-governed provincial agencies. Please see the attached guide for further details of each priority.

I would be pleased to discuss these priorities during our next meeting, and I look forward to hearing how they will be reflected in the agency's upcoming business plan and in ongoing agency operations.

Thank you and your fellow board members for your continued commitment to Metrolinx. Your work and ongoing support is invaluable to me and the people of Ontario.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deputy Jones ([Doug.Jones@ontario.ca](mailto:Doug.Jones@ontario.ca)).

Sincerely,



Caroline Mulroney  
Minister of Transportation

- c. Stan Cho, Associate Minister of Transportation  
Doug Jones, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation  
Phil Verster, President & Chief Executive Officer, Metrolinx  
Felix Fung, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation  
Tija Dirks, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation  
Ian Freeman, Chief Administrative Officer, Ministry of Transportation

Attachment:

- Government Priorities for Agency Sector Chart