

**Ministry of
Transportation**

Office of the Minister

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**Ministère des
Transports**

Bureau du ministre

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Thursday, March 21st, 2024

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 write to you in your capacity as Chair of the board of Metrolinx. Pursuant to the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out my expectations for Metrolinx for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Metrolinx is expected to act in the best interests of the people of Ontario and achieve the initiatives outlined in this Annual Letter of Direction in a manner that is aligned with its government approved multi-year funding allocation. The ministry will continue to work with the agency in refining priorities as required on an ongoing basis.

The 2024-25 transportation-specific initiatives are as follows. I ask that you provide progress updates on a quarterly basis.

1. Ensure successful and timely delivery of the agency's capital projects and continue to provide the ministry with monthly reports on project implementation and progress:
 - Work with the ministry and Infrastructure Ontario to develop a framework on an expedient process to resolve commercial claims by September 1, 2024.
 - Work with the ministry to provide project information to the Government of Canada on a timely basis to ensure the successful negotiation of federal funding agreements on which delivery of the province's priority projects depends.
 - Continue to act as the "Project Sponsor" for the priority transit projects in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

- Continued implementation of the *Building Transit Faster Act, 2020* (BTFA), including the measures delegated to Metrolinx.
 - Keep the ministry informed on any issues and mitigations impacting schedule, budget delivery and progress on the priority transit projects.
2. In collaboration with the ministry, advance the implementation of transit fare and service integration (FSI) across the Greater Golden Horseshoe Region (GGHR) throughout 2024, by:
 - Administer the One Fare Program
 - Support the development of the FSI vision/plan and implement the FSI plan in accordance with provincial direction by applying a regional transit FSI lens in its service planning and operational decisions, considering local and partner operational needs
 - Assess the existing GO Fare structure – while ensuring no increases to existing GO fares – recommend options on how to align its short distance fares with local system fares as well as bring about a consistent application of GO fares across the GO network. Reporting back to the ministry with an assessment on GO Fare structures by November 2024
 - Work with regional transit partners to facilitate the adoption of a consistent wayfinding standard across the GGH region, leveraging the existing FSI Table and working with MTO to determine appropriate leverage.
 3. Develop a five-year strategic plan which outlines Metrolinx’s roadmap for 2025 to 2030. The plan should guide the agency’s future annual business plans, thereby supporting alignment and coordination across the agency’s business areas. Metrolinx is to submit a draft strategic plan to the ministry by October 31, 2024.
 4. Complete a review of the agency’s organizational structure, including the agency's use of third-party resources. Please bring back a plan to ensure that the workforce growth is managed prudently, including looking at the redeployment of resources to priority areas where necessary. Metrolinx is to seek ministry approval for specific terms of the review by May 1, 2024, and is to submit the review and strategy to the ministry by October 31, 2024.
 5. Refine the agency’s performance measurement framework in alignment with ministry priorities focusing on operational excellence and governance, stakeholder engagement, customer service, capital project delivery, workforce initiatives, safety, and environmental and social sustainability. The ministry will collaborate with Metrolinx, providing substantive direction and technical advice related to the required elements, definitions, considerations and timelines to support the refinement of the performance measurement framework. Metrolinx is to submit a draft performance

measurement and reporting framework to the ministry by October 31, 2024, followed by regular progress reporting thereafter.

6. Work with the ministry to develop and implement a new agency governance and relationship framework. This framework will address the need for clearer and more formalized relationship management to enable effective decision-making and prioritization, enhanced oversight, and clear and consistent communication across our organizations at every level. The implementation of the formalized relationship management structure is to be in place by March 31, 2025.
7. Work with the Ministry to mitigate congestion to the extent possible during Metrolinx-led construction activities by:
 - Conducting a comprehensive evaluation of Metrolinx-led construction activities and their impact on traffic congestion
 - Developing a construction and consultation schedule that advances major construction projects, minimizes congestion, and identifies early community and municipal engagement opportunities.

Both the impact assessment and schedule are to include the priority provincial projects and consider other municipally-led or approved projects, such as road maintenance works and utility relocations in proximity to Metrolinx construction sites, as well as future Municipal transit projects (*such as the Waterfront and Eglinton East LRTs*) that could have a material impact on construction-related congestion. The Ministry will assist Metrolinx in obtaining any data needed from the City of Toronto to assist in this work. Metrolinx is to submit the impact assessment and schedule to the ministry by September 1, 2024.

8. Continue to meaningfully engage with Indigenous communities and organizations and fulfil duty to consult obligations with Indigenous communities, ensuring consistency with provincial policies and direction for Indigenous relations. Seek the advice of the ministry before entering into any significant commitments or agreements with Indigenous communities to ensure adherence to provincial policy.
9. In advance of the regulatory deadline on January 1, 2025, ensure compliance with the Transportation Standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). These standards set out requirements to help transportation and public transit providers make their services and vehicles accessible to people with disabilities. In alignment with the standards, Metrolinx is to ensure that all existing GO stations are fully accessible. If any stations will not be compliant by January 1, 2025, please submit a plan by no later than April 30, 2024, on how Metrolinx will bring those stations into compliance, with clear timelines outlined.
10. Update Metrolinx's French Language Services (FLS) Action Plan to ensure the Action Plan outlines a path to compliance with the *French Language Services Act* (FLSA). The updated FLS Action Plan should include specific and measurable action items to meet these requirements. The updated FLS Action Plan should be

submitted to the ministry by April 30, 2024, followed by quarterly progress updates thereafter.

I am also sharing several government-wide priorities applicable to Metrolinx.

Government-Wide initiatives

- **Competitiveness, sustainability and expenditure management**
 - Operating within the agency's financial allocations.
 - Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation (including non-fare revenues), efficiencies and savings through innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
 - Complying with applicable direction related to accounting practices and supply chain centralization, including leveraging Supply Ontario's bulk purchasing arrangement and working with Supply Ontario on strategic procurement initiatives.
 - Complying with realty interim measures for agency office space.
 - Leverage and meet benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives.

- **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.
 - Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability, and providing the minister with annual skills matrices to ensure boards have qualified appointees.
 - Reviewing and updating agency KPIs annually to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

- **Risk management**
 - Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of agency risks, including cyber security, and any future emergency risks.

- **Workforce/Labour management**
 - Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery, including redeploying resources to priority areas, where needed
 - Aligning Human Resource and Accommodations strategies with OPS directives and policy.
 - Adhering to TB/MBC labour and bargaining mandates.
 - Prudently and efficiently managing operational funding and workforce size.

- **Diversity and inclusion**

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

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

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 my Chief of staff, Joshua Workman (Joshua.Workman@ontario.ca).

Sincerely,



Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria
Minister of Transportation

- c. Vijay Thanigasalam, Associate Minister of Transportation
Doug Jones, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation
Phil Verster, Chief Executive Officer, Metrolinx
Melissa Djurakov, Assistant Deputy Minister, Oversight and Agency Governance Division, Ministry of Transportation
Felix Fung, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation
Virginia McKimm, Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Services Division, Ministry of Transportation

Attachment:

- Government Priorities for Agency Sector Chart