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Communication	
CW:	<u>OCT 5/16</u>
Item:	<u>20</u>



memorandum

DATE: OCTOBER 4, 2016

TO: HONOURABLE MAYOR MAURIZIO BEVILACQUA AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: JOHN MACKENZIE, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER,
PLANNING & GROWTH MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: COMMUNICATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – OCTOBER 5, 2016
ITEM NO. 20, REPORT NO. 34
METROLINX THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

Attached for your reference is the Region of York report, "York Region's Response to Metrolinx's Discussion Paper for the next Regional Transportation Plan", submitted to its Committee of the Whole for October 6, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN MACKENZIE
Deputy City Manager,
Planning & Growth Management

Copy to:

Daniel Kostopoulos, City Manager
Jeffrey Abrams, City Clerk
Paul Jankowski, Deputy City Manager, Public Works
Andrew Pearce, Director, Development Engineering & Infrastructure Planning
Roy McQuillin, Director, Policy Planning & Environmental Sustainability

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Transportation Services
October 6, 2016

Report of the
Commissioner of Transportation Services

**York Region's Response to Metrolinx's Discussion Paper for the
next Regional Transportation Plan**

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the comments outlined in this report as the Region's formal response to the Metrolinx Discussion Paper for the next Regional Transportation Plan, released August 15, 2016.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report and attachments to Metrolinx and to the Clerks of the local municipalities.

2. Purpose

This report seeks Council endorsement of comments outlined in this report as the Region's formal response to the Metrolinx Discussion Paper for the next Regional Transportation Plan for submission prior to the deadline of October 31, 2016. Attachment 1 is the Region's technical response to Metrolinx's request for comments through the Discussion Paper for the development of the next Regional Transportation Plan. Metrolinx is required to review and make any necessary changes to the Regional Transportation Plan every ten years under the Metrolinx Act, 2006. A draft of the next Regional Transportation Plan is expected to be available for comment in mid-2017.

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3. Background

Metrolinx is mandated to develop and implement an integrated transportation system for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area

Metrolinx, a Provincial agency formed under the *Metrolinx Act*, 2006, was created to improve the coordination and integration of all modes of transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). The organization's mission is to champion, develop and implement an integrated transportation system for the GTHA region that enhances prosperity, sustainability and quality of life. The plan was developed to conform to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2006 (Growth Plan) which, together with the Greenbelt Plan, sets out the Province's long-term vision for where and how the GTHA should grow. It has been the basis of prioritizing transit investment and initiatives over the last ten years.

In 2008, Metrolinx launched "The Big Move" (Regional Transportation Plan or RTP), a 25-year \$50 billion capital expansion plan investing in regional transportation for the GTHA.

A complete review of the RTP is required every ten years

Under the *Metrolinx Act*, a complete review of the RTP is required every ten years from when the *Act* first came into force. Currently, Metrolinx is completing the first phase of the RTP review by releasing a Discussion Paper which incorporates an updated vision, goals and objectives as well as background research and analysis. The next phase of the review will be to update the RTP with new and existing background research, analysis, strategies, plans and studies as well as development of the transportation network. The last phase will be the release of a draft RTP in 2017 for consultation and adoption of the final RTP. A subsequent RTP Implementation Plan is expected in 2018-2019.

The next Metrolinx RTP will align with Provincial Plans and York Region plans and policies

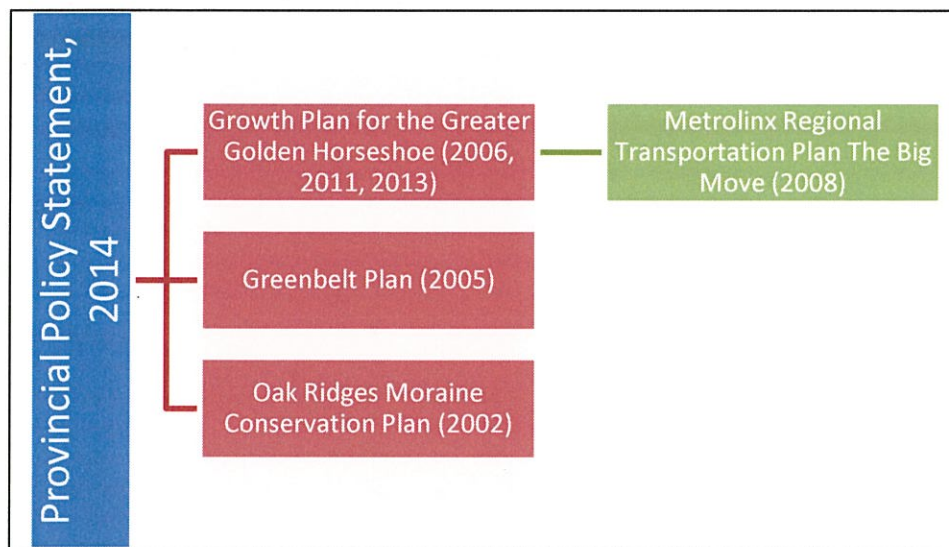
Under provincial legislation, Metrolinx has a mandate to co-ordinate, plan, finance, develop and implement an integrated, multi-modal transportation network that aligns with policies of Ontario's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (as depicted in Figure 1). The Regional Transportation Plan and the Growth Plan work together to ensure the region's population and employment growth are supported by the transportation system. The updated RTP will work in

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concert with the efforts of the Province to manage growth and address climate change to 2041, ten years beyond The Big Move's original long-range planning horizon. York Region's continued support and active participation in the current review is critical to the success of the Plans, and to meeting Regional objectives.

Under the *Planning Act*, the Province is the approval authority for the York Region Official Plan. All planning decisions under the York Region Official Plan shall conform to provincial plans (including the Growth Plan) and be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. The York Region Official Plan (2010) aligns with Vision 2051 and provides a strong policy foundation for future transportation network expansion by establishing a number of key policies that guided actions and strategies in the York Region 2016 Transportation Master Plan (TMP).

**Figure 1
Relationship between Provincial Policies and Plans**



**The next Metrolinx RTP must be aligned with the proposed
Provincial Growth Plan to support anticipated growth**

The Province is continuing work on the Coordinated Review (Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Niagara Escarpment Plan). This represents an opportunity for the RTP and Growth Plan to be fully integrated and aligned with each other, so that all infrastructure requirements needed to support growth are reflected in both Plans, whether funded or unfunded. For example, the Yonge North Subway Extension is not identified in the Proposed Growth Plan (2016) while it is identified in the

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existing RTP and is a critical piece of infrastructure needed to support growth. This and other similarly-planned projects should be included in both Plans.

Achieving the Growth Plan objective of building transit-oriented complete communities is dependent on the Province and Metrolinx, in partnership with municipalities, being able to deliver critical transit infrastructure.

The RTP supports implementation of rapid transit corridors in York Region

The RTP is a 25-year multi-modal transportation plan for the GTHA. The RTP identified opportunities to implement transit and rapid transit improvements to help accommodate growth and intensification of the four Regional Urban Growth Centres.

The RTP supported and facilitated implementation of vivaNext rapidways (Rapidways), dedicated lanes for express bus service along Highway 7 East (Markham and Richmond Hill), Highway 7 West (Vaughan), Yonge Street (Richmond Hill, Newmarket) and Davis Drive (Newmarket). The Rapidways provide fast, reliable and comfortable service to residents of York Region. Various sections of the Rapidways have been completed and are operational while other sections are currently planned or under construction.

Metrolinx has been and is currently improving and expanding GO Transit services in York Region since the release of the RTP. It has expanded parking at a number of GO stations and park and ride lots, increased service frequency and capacity, improved bus terminals and GO station platforms and completed a new East Gwillimbury GO bus facility in 2014 to improve access and service.

Metrolinx requires input into the Discussion Paper by October 31, 2016

Metrolinx released a Discussion Paper August 15, 2016, to support development of the next RTP. Input and responses to discussion questions included in the document are due October 31, 2016. A draft of the next Regional Transportation Plan is expected to be available mid-2017 for comment with a further RTP Implementation Plan in 2018-19.

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Objectives of the 10-year RTP review are:

- Review and update the RTP, using the existing RTP as the starting point
- Review and confirm the vision, goals and objectives
- Review planning and policies, including aligning the review with the Proposed Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2016
- Address implementation and phasing through an implementation plan

4. Analysis and Implications

The Region requests Metrolinx provide a minimum six-month review and comment period for the draft of the next RTP

The next RTP will be a critical plan moving forward with direct implications and impacts on major transportation and infrastructure in The Regional Municipality of York, the Cities of Markham and Vaughan, the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Whitchurch-Stouffville and the Township of King. As such, it is essential to have a minimum six-month review and comment period for the draft RTP to accommodate local municipal review and Council endorsement processes.

The Discussion Paper seeks feedback from stakeholders regarding future transportation system performance

The discussion paper presents an opportunity for York Region, the public, and all partners and stakeholders in planning, building and implementing the GTHA region's transportation system to reflect on how well it is working today in the context of the Growth Plan and on its performance in the future.

Metrolinx proposes updating the original vision, goals and objectives of the RTP, as well as exploring opportunities to:

- Leverage committed transit investments
- Connect and align the transportation system in the GTHA
- Explore and incorporate new mobility options

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Recommendations are based on consultation input received from both internal stakeholders and local municipal staff

Staff from Transportation Services engaged several internal stakeholders, including Planning and Economic Development, Public Health and Environmental Services as well as local municipal staff to develop recommendations on the Discussion Paper. Staff was invited to provide written responses and participate in a workshop to review and provide input on technical recommendations included in Attachment 1.

Comments to Metrolinx regarding the next RTP revolve around five critical component themes

1. The Region recommends the next RTP include additional information regarding prioritization of projects.

Regions and municipalities within the GTHA vary drastically in profile and context from levels of growth and density to their existing and future rural/urban/suburban landscape to other factors, such as the protected natural environment (Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, etc.). Some municipalities simply cannot accept population and employment growth without appropriate transportation infrastructure in place. There is an inherent assumption in the Discussion Paper all municipalities can accept population and employment growth without regard to the timelines of growth and required transportation and infrastructure needs to support the growth.

A clearer understanding of prioritization, timing and funding of projects would also increase transparency and help promote more successful integration toward regional collaboration and connectivity. Stakeholders will benefit from increased clarity regarding issues of equity and disparity across the system. Additional information would assist with streamlining the planning process, including needs and requirements, to align with Growth Plan forecasts. From a funding perspective, the Region supports the need to identify new, sustainable revenue sources for both capital and operating expenses for transportation initiatives.

From the Region's perspective, the Yonge North Subway Extension, expansion of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors and establishment of new GO stations within York Region to support Regional Express Rail (RER) should be treated as priority and included in the next RTP to meet the growth plan forecasts assigned to York Region.

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2. The Region recommends the next RTP include an objective to ensure collaboration with municipalities such as a detailed partnership and consultation plan.

An objective clearly outlining a proposed framework regarding communication and collaboration between Metrolinx, municipalities and other stakeholders would clarify the process, roles and stakeholder responsibilities. Major transportation and infrastructure projects will require collaboration from all levels of government, various stakeholders, landowners and citizens.

The Region recommends Metrolinx establish a collaborative consultation plan and continue to consult and collaborate with the Region, the Cities of Markham and Vaughan, the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville and the Township of King as soon as possible with an open and transparent process. This could be started at the initial screening stage to determine which projects proceed toward RTP evaluation as well as at the planning and design stage for all existing and new projects.

3. The Region recommends the next RTP outline potential programs and policies to address first and last mile transportation gaps as well as other emerging influences.

The discussion paper asks for suggestions regarding how the RTP should focus on emerging trends, including car-sharing, on-demand services and autonomous vehicles. The RTP will need to adequately address the need to find solutions for first and last mile transportation gaps as well as infrastructure requirements to accommodate emerging technologies and autonomous vehicles.

It would also benefit the next RTP to emphasize and strengthen the relationship between the regional rapid transit network and the local transit network. This can be accomplished with seamless, cross-boundary travel between neighbouring municipalities, inclusion of transit priority, funding and improvements for local transit. Local transit serves the first and last mile and is the connecting mode to the regional rapid transit network.

4. The Region recommends Metrolinx include an area of focus in the next RTP to address key impacts to local municipalities, such as parking, infiltration of congestion to local streets, while having regard for existing urban form and contexts at Metrolinx/GO stations and facilities.

The RTP would benefit from emphasizing transportation and infrastructure needs to support urban mobility hubs, gateway hubs and major transit stations in a context sensitive manner in York Region. Impacts to local context, such as

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parking, vehicles accessing and exiting major transit stations and mobility hubs, need to be addressed. The next RTP should take into account varying existing and future contexts surrounding these facilities, including natural and cultural heritage areas.

5. The Region recommends Metrolinx consider a longer term outlook beyond the 2041 horizon for transportation and infrastructure planning.

Since Provincial policy does not restrict planning for infrastructure and public services to a 25-year time horizon and, given that transportation infrastructure can require significant time to fully study, plan, design and construct, a planning horizon beyond 2041 would be beneficial. An outlook beyond 25 years may include identifying preliminary opportunities, such as extending RER beyond announced municipalities and stations, additional service on specific corridors and the extension of the Yonge North Subway and Toronto-York Spadina Subway from Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive, and the possibility of an east-west connecting loop between the two along Major Mackenzie Drive. To ensure transportation expansion continues to meet regional growth to 2041 and beyond, the RTP may need to address individual municipalities' growth and their subsequent transportation needs with a longer term outlook.

The Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan supports Council-approved plans and policies

The RTP supports the Region's key plans and policy documents, including Vision 2051, the Regional Official Plan (2010) and the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan. The Region envisions a future where a seamless mobility network provides access to all destinations for residents, employees and visitors, promotes active healthy living and safely and efficiently moves people and goods. Through the discussion paper, staff will continue working with Metrolinx, MTO and local municipalities to support development of the next RTP to facilitate a better integrated, comprehensive transportation system that supports the functioning of communities and economic well-being of York Region.

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5. Financial Implications

Critical to the update of the RTP is identifying new, sustainable revenue sources for both capital and operating expenses for transportation initiatives. Staff recommend the next RTP include updates to its investment strategy.

There are no financial implications to this report. The review of the Discussion Paper was undertaken with existing resource and staff complement.

6. Local Municipal Impact

Recommendations were formed with input from local municipalities

Staff consulted with the local municipalities to prepare a response to the discussion paper. Responses in Attachment 1 represent consolidated technical feedback received from Region and local municipal staff.

The update to the RTP provides an opportunity for the Region and local municipalities to leverage committed transit investments to connect and align the transportation system in York Region, as well as explore and incorporate new mobility options. This will benefit all York Region residents and businesses. The discussion paper and stakeholder comments will help shape the next Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan, which will have significant transportation impacts on local municipalities through new policies, directions, programs and phasing of Metrolinx and GO Transit projects.

7. Conclusion

The Discussion Paper for the next Regional Transportation Plan provides the Region with an opportunity to provide input on the development of the RTP. Comments provided on the discussion paper will be forwarded to Metrolinx for consideration in the development of the RTP.

Staff will continue to explore and participate in opportunities to provide input on the next RTP and will provide updates, where applicable, to Council as new information becomes available.

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For more information on this report, please contact Angela Gibson, Acting Director, Infrastructure Management and PMO, at ext. 75949.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Recommended by:

Approved for Submission:

Stephen Collins, P.Eng.
Acting Commissioner, Transportation
Services

Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

September 23, 2016

Attachments (1)

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

York Region's Response to Metrolinx's Discussion Paper for the Next Regional Transportation Plan

General Comments

The Regional Municipality of York (the Region) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Discussion Paper for the Next Regional Transportation Plan (the Discussion Paper). The Region believes the Discussion Paper is aligned with the Region's 2016 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) endorsed by Council in June 2016 and would be pleased to meet with Metrolinx to review these recommendations.

The Region recognizes the Discussion Paper is only the first step in the process to update the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). It is anticipated Metrolinx will work collaboratively with the Region and other stakeholders to develop the final RTP with consideration of our comments and recommendations regarding projects to be included, issues to be addressed and alignment with other Provincial planning documents.

The Region looks forward to reviewing and commenting on specific projects and initiatives that support RTP goals and objectives. We support the need to identify new, sustainable revenue sources for both capital and operating expenses for transportation initiatives. The Region is proud of the accomplishments it has already made to support development of a world-class transit system in York Region, including its transit infrastructure investments, real-time service information and contribution to construction of the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension. The Region also launched MyTrip York to help residents plan their travels along with other transportation demand management (TDM) programs.

The Region notes there is no detailed mention of how projects will be prioritized in the Discussion Paper. In particular, the Region wants to ensure the Yonge North Subway Extension, expansion of BRT corridors and establishment of new GO Transit stations within York Region to support Regional Express Rail are treated as priority projects given the Growth Plan forecast for York Region.

The Region notes the Discussion Paper does not provide details regarding a proposed framework regarding communication and collaboration between Metrolinx, municipalities and other stakeholders. There is limited acknowledgement to indicate most projects will require collaboration from all levels of government, various stakeholders, landowners and citizens.

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- G1 The Region recommends Metrolinx provide a minimum six-month review and comment period for the draft RTP when it is released mid-2017, including new project evaluation and prioritization criteria, to accommodate local municipal review and Council endorsement processes.
- G2 The Region recommends Metrolinx establish a collaborative consultation plan and continue to consult and collaborate with The Regional Municipality of York, the Cities of Markham and Vaughan, the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville and the Township of King as soon as possible with an open and transparent process (i.e. at the initial screening stage to determine which projects proceed toward RTP evaluation as well as at the planning and design stage for all existing and new projects).

The Region offers the following comments in response to the questions posed in the Discussion Paper.

1. Toward a Shared Vision of the Future

- a) *Do the Vision, Goals and Objectives resonate with you and the 2041 future you would wish for?*
- b) *Did we (i.e. Metrolinx) miss anything?*
- c) *Does anything belong in another policy or document?*

In general, the Region recognizes the Vision, Goals and Objectives outlined within the Discussion Paper are aligned with the objectives of the York Region 2016 Transportation Master Plan to:

- Create a world class transit system
- Develop a road network fit for the future
- Integrate active transportation in urban area
- Maximize the potential of employment areas
- Make the last mile work

- 1.1 The Region recommends Metrolinx include “affordability”, as part of the RTP’s “Vision”, as a contributing factor towards quality of life for residents of the GTHA.
- 1.2 The Region recommends Metrolinx continue to include “health” as a component of the RTP’s Vision.
- 1.3 The Region recommends the Vision reflect complete communities contribute to a strong economy, not only connecting people to jobs. The statement requires enhancement to be inclusive of other amenities and destinations.

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The Region supports streamlining goals and objectives to better focus the next RTP. The Region further recognizes the challenge to find an appropriate balance between the number of objectives and specific actions arising out of the RTP and recommends more specific language in accordance with the following:

- 1.4 The Region recommends the RTP emphasize and strengthen the relationship between the regional rapid transit network and the local transit network. This can be accomplished with more mention of transit priority and funding for local transit and improvements of local transit. Local transit serves the first and last mile and is the connecting mode to the regional rapid transit network.

The Region notes the Discussion Paper speaks to municipalities considering parking charges and lower parking requirements to support transportation demand management (TDM) programs and reducing auto dependency. Since Metrolinx is the largest parking provider in North America with a total of 72,000 parking spaces, it should be acknowledged Metrolinx plays a critical role in increasing GO station access transit mode share based on parking management of these spaces. Parking management is a challenge facing all municipalities.

- 1.5 The Region recommends Metrolinx review pricing mechanisms and parking lot footprints with a view to improving local public transit and active transportation usage to/from stations and other major trip generators/destinations.
- 1.6 The Region recommends Goal A explicitly identify seamless cross boundary travel between neighbouring municipalities to provide continuous uninterrupted service within its objectives.
- 1.7 The Region recommends Metrolinx clearly define in Goal A what it means by "realistic options".
- 1.8 The Region recommends Metrolinx consider impacts to local municipal transit agencies including, but not limited to, capital and operating impacts associated with increased services (i.e. Regional Express Rail, additional GO train and bus service, etc.).
- 1.9 The Region recommends Metrolinx complete its Fare and Service Integration Strategy and further consult with stakeholders in advance of finalizing the RTP.
- 1.10 The Region recommends Metrolinx introduce new policy areas that enable strategies to support integrated mobility systems, intelligent transportation systems, first and last mile connections for transit users and active, healthy communities.

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- 1.11 The Region recommends objectives in Goal A reflect alternative mobility options, such as on-demand transit, TDM, etc., to serve rural communities as this would be beneficial in seeking to fill missing transportation gaps.
- 1.12 The Region recommends Metrolinx reword Goal C, Objective 9 to reflect the desire that people feel safe and secure when travelling without limiting this to injuries or deaths from transportation, as there may be other hazards or risks, including those posed by other transit users.
- 1.13 The Region recommends an objective under Goal C to reference improvements in air quality and reduced negative impacts on human health. This is identified as Objective 15 in the current RTP.
- 1.14 The Region recommends Metrolinx use the term "Active Transportation" in Goal C, and throughout the RTP, as it is more inclusive than just walking and cycling.
- 1.15 The Region recommends Metrolinx include an objective to ensure collaboration with municipalities from start to finish during design and planning of new and existing infrastructure (e.g. GO train stations, mobility hubs, etc.) to facilitate safe and convenient active transportation (e.g. pedestrian access/bridges into stations, multi-use paths, etc.), vehicle and transit access, etc.
- 1.16 The Region recommends Metrolinx include an objective to increase active transportation trips in the RTP.
- 1.17 The Region recommends Goal D recognizes the need for long-term planning and corridor protection for infrastructure may be required beyond the planning horizon of the next RTP with specific reference to the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan). In order to ensure the RTP supports growth to 2041 and beyond, the RTP needs to recognize and support planning that extends beyond the planning horizon of the Growth Plan, consistent with Section 1.1.2 and 1.6.8 of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014, which does not restrict a future time horizon.
- 1.18 The Region recommends Goal D continue to emphasize the need for transit-supportive densities in urban growth centres, major transit station areas, priority transit corridors and other major opportunities (e.g. mobility hubs, etc.), per the Growth Plan. Consistent terminology and better integration with the Proposed Growth Plan 2016 should be ensured in the RTP update.

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- 1.19 The Region recommends Goal E have regard for source water protection including intake protection zones, wellhead protection areas, highly vulnerable aquifers and recommendations from local Risk Management Officials. Certain transit-related activities have the potential to impact groundwater or surface water supplies and could be subject to Source Protection Plan policies.
- 1.20 The Region recommends Goal F, include “technical rigour and transparency in the selection and prioritization of major projects” or specific reference to “evidence-based decision making in transit planning”. The Region supports Metrolinx’s recognition that sustainable funding for operating and maintenance costs is a critical component of the RTP. It is important for Metrolinx to continue to undertake business case analyses for major projects in order to fully consider all corridor/route options, capital and operating costs, alignment with the Proposed Growth Plan 2016 and other policy objectives and prioritization of projects given limited fiscal resources.
- 1.21 The Region recommends Metrolinx include private and development sectors in achieving Goal F.
- 1.22 The Region recommends identification of a clearly described linkage, integration, distinction and hierarchy between the RTP and upcoming Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) multi-modal transportation plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). For example, it is unclear from the Discussion Paper whether Metrolinx RTP policies, projects, directions, phases of projects, etc. will be included in MTO’s multi-modal transportation plan.
- 1.23 The Region recommends revising the terminology for a “Regional Transportation System”. A “Regional Transportation System” entails all aspects of transportation and transportation related activities. The primary focus of the previous RTP is regional transit and TDM initiatives. Highways, roads, goods movement corridors and active transportation are primarily planned, programmed, funded and operated by provincial, regional or local governments.
- 1.24 The Region recommends Metrolinx clarify its role in implementing and operationalizing its role in “thinking as a region”.

2. Opportunities for Better Transit and Transportation

- a) *Do the areas of focus for the next RTP make sense to you?*
- b) *Are there other opportunities or challenges you want the plan to consider?*
- c) *Do you have specific local transit or transportation situations that will benefit from a more regional lens?*

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- d) *Looking beyond 2031, what should the RTP include to ensure that transportation expansion continues to meet regional growth to 2041?*

In general, the Region supports proposed areas of focus for the next RTP but believes there are additional focus areas to support better transit and transportation.

- 2.1 The Region recommends the next RTP put more focus on prioritizing infrastructure to support Growth Plan population and employment projections and proposed timelines (e.g. 2031, 2036 and 2041). A number of currently unfunded rapid transit corridors are identified to support and accommodate growth to 2041 in York Region. These currently unfunded corridors must be included in the RTP update, namely Yonge North Subway Extension, new bus rapid transit along Major Mackenzie Drive, Jane Street, Woodbine Avenue, Leslie Street/Don Mills Road and extensions of existing Rapidways on Yonge Street and Highway 7.
- 2.2 The Region recommends additional emphasis be included in the RTP for transportation and infrastructure needs to support current and proposed mobility hubs, gateway hubs and major transit stations in a context sensitive manner in York Region, including, but not limited to, Unionville, Newmarket and Concord.
- 2.3 The Region recommends local municipal landscapes, urban form and context be reflected as an area of focus in the RTP. Impacts to local context, such as vehicles accessing and exiting major transit stations and mobility hubs, are important considerations for future planning and implementation of the RTP.
- 2.4 The Region recommends Metrolinx consider a stronger emphasis on incorporating transit access and affordability for people on lower incomes to reduce inequities in access to employment and services.
- 2.5 The Region recommends Metrolinx review fare structures for its rail and bus services and parking facilities to improve local and regional transit connections, increase first and last mile transit modal share and reduce local traffic infiltration.
- 2.6 The Region recommends Metrolinx address how decisions regarding service improvements on the Richmond Hill, Barrie and Stouffville rail corridors would potentially affect timing and implementation of service improvements on other adjacent corridors, with a view to anticipating and understanding how York Region would be affected over the short, medium and long term. For example, the Richmond Hill GO line is not scheduled to be part of RER in spite of needed service improvements and the potential of an additional GO station or mobility hub at Yonge Street and 16th Avenue.

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- 2.7 The Region recommends Metrolinx address varying existing and future contexts and surrounding areas of mobility hubs and density requirements for development (for example, Growth Plan targets).
- 2.8 The Region recommends Metrolinx address the need for greater connectivity to employment areas in the Cities of Markham and Vaughan and the Town of Richmond Hill. The focus of higher-order or rapid transit in the GTA has historically been Union Station-focused. This is changing as an increasing number of people want to access these other employment areas using sustainable modes of travel.

There are a number of opportunities and challenges York Region encourages Metrolinx to consider as part of the RTP update process:

- 2.9 The Region recommends the RTP reflect different characteristics of transit station areas (GO rail stations and bus terminals, mobility hubs, anchor hubs, etc.) and existing and future local growth and densities. Collaboration with local municipalities will help facilitate and achieve the vision set out for these areas (especially on lands owned by Metrolinx or the Province).
- 2.10 The Region recommends the RTP include east-west inter-regional travel. The focus of the RTP and connections between urban growth centres have been specifically with Downtown Toronto. There has been growing demand for inter-regional travel (not involving Toronto). The 407 Transitway is an example of an opportunity for a long-term vision which would enable travelers across the GTHA to move east-west freely by transit between regions. This is also an opportunity to connect urban growth centres, mobility hubs, etc., to each other.
- 2.11 The Region recommends the RTP consider including a full performance measurement and monitoring plan through collaboration with local municipal partners. Specific performance indicators for the GTHA (and individual municipalities), timelines for report back and monitoring and clear guidelines/objectives for assessment will allow for an objective evaluation of the performance of the RTP. Metrolinx may want to consider incorporating an additional performance measure that estimates health benefits. For example, the recent GTHA report "Improving Health by Design" provides information on the impact of traffic related air pollution on health outcomes for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.
- 2.12 The Region recommends the RTP include further discussions regarding environmental and health impacts of transportation.

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- 2.13 The Region recommends the RTP recognize additional impacts of congestion which add to significant environmental and public health burdens from vehicle emissions, air pollutants, greenhouse gases, noise pollution, light mitigation, etc.
- 2.14 The Region recommends the RTP reflect a more regional lens be applied to the Yonge North Subway Extension, as its benefits would extend beyond York Region.
- 2.15 The Region recommends the RTP provide more transit and transportation opportunities to serve rural areas of York Region and rural municipalities in adjacent regions for inter-regional travel. Transportation options in rural areas are largely absent from the Discussion Paper. The Region's 2016 TMP indicates inter-regional travel is already occurring and increasing between York Region and Peel and Durham Regions.
- 2.16 The Region recommends Metrolinx undertake immediate action to effectively address existing parking and congestion issues in conjunction with development of the RTP. As service levels continue to increase (e.g. RER) in the future, these issues will continue to worsen and the need for supporting local infrastructure will be required.
- 2.17 The Region recommends Metrolinx, in consultation with municipalities, improve safety of existing rail level crossings in urban and rural areas, particularly at non-grade separated crossings.
- 2.18 The Region recommends the RTP proactively recognize the importance of longer term transportation and infrastructure planning for all modes. A planning horizon beyond 2041 would be helpful as Provincial policy does not restrict planning for infrastructure and public services to a 25-year time horizon. An outlook beyond 25 years may include preliminary opportunities, such as extending RER beyond announced municipalities and stations, additional service on specific routes/lines and the extension of the Spadina and Yonge Street subways north of Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive and the possibility of an east-west connection between the Yonge Subway and Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension along Major Mackenzie Drive. To ensure transportation expansion continues to meet regional growth to 2041 and beyond, the RTP may need to address individual municipalities' growth and their subsequent transportation needs with a longer term outlook.

Regions and municipalities within the GTHA vary drastically in profile and context from levels of growth and density to their existing and future rural/urban/suburban landscape to other factors, such as the protected natural environment (Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, etc.). Some municipalities simply cannot accept population and

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employment growth without appropriate transportation infrastructure in place. There is an inherent assumption in this Discussion Paper all municipalities can accept population and employment growth without regard to the timelines of growth and required transportation and infrastructure needs to support the growth.

2.19 The Region recommends Metrolinx consider the following questions in the development of the RTP:

- At what point in the screening and prioritizing process for projects will municipalities be consulted?
- What weight or consideration will Metrolinx give to high priority local transportation projects compared to regional/GTHA transportation project priorities?
- With Metrolinx being the largest provider of parking in North America, how will the RTP consider region-wide strategies for paid parking at GO stations and/or innovative parking management solutions in order to reduce the impact of parking on surrounding land uses and local road networks?

2.20 The Region recommends the RTP consider the role of GO/Metrolinx, the Province and municipalities, as landowners, community partners and leaders, in creating quality places and spaces that contribute to a high quality of life.

2.21 The Region recommends Metrolinx consider including additional discussion on how opportunities and issues relating to governance and funding will be addressed in the RTP (e.g. governance roles and responsibilities and funding strategies such as potential public-private partnerships).

3. Opportunities for Regional Integration and Collaboration

- a) *Have we (i.e. Metrolinx) identified the key areas for improved regional/local integration and connectivity?*
- b) *Are there other areas where local and regional connections and integration need to be addressed?*
- c) *Where are the opportunities to improve regional collaboration to better support the implementation of the RTP? Are new tools required?*
- d) *How should regional equity be addressed in the next RTP and subsequent Implementation Plan? How should issues of transit equity and access be addressed?*

In general, the Region supports the key areas for improved regional/local integration and connectivity for the next RTP and offers the following recommendations for further consideration and discussion:

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- 3.1 The Region recommends Metrolinx provide further details regarding how it expects to prioritize and fund projects. The Discussion Paper addresses the matter of funding and Metrolinx proposes "bringing all public transit systems together". Clarity is needed to better understand this.
- 3.2 The Region recommends Metrolinx confirm a clear system would be in place to outline where funding would be allocated and that processes would be followed to ensure project prioritization and selection remain transparent. Screening and evaluation criteria should be carefully developed to strike a balance between urban and rural interests. This would help the Region's goal toward supporting a more continuous grid system of rapid transit and meeting the needs of Provincial Growth Centres, followed by Anchor Hubs and Gateway Hubs, including, for example, reconsideration of Metrolinx's plan for the Concord GO Station.

Development Charges play a critical role in supporting many transportation improvements. It is critical the Province finalize review and implementation of funding commitments for key infrastructure projects by senior levels of government and, with respect to meeting long term transportation demands across the GTHA, implementation of new funding and revenue sources for lower tier municipalities.

- 3.3 The Region recommends the RTP more strongly emphasize and outline how issues of equity and disparities will be addressed toward improving accessibility to transportation services in the GTHA. At a minimum, such disparities should be addressed through Metrolinx's current regional fare integration and coordination efforts.

The Region supports Metrolinx's position in the Discussion Paper that equity should be addressed. It should be noted various recent transit investments in the GTHA have resulted in noticeable cost and service disparities. For example, in some cases, 'premium' services have been implemented along some corridors where corresponding costs have not entirely been reflected in the fare, such as GO services which provide free car parking.

- 3.4 The Region recommends the process of planning, selecting and implementing transportation investments be determined through an objective consideration of needs and demand in alignment with Growth Plan forecasts.
- 3.5 The Region recommends the RTP recognize how to balance competing priorities for prioritization, funding and phasing of projects. Municipalities across the GTHA have high priority transportation projects that may be viewed as competing against one another for the same limited funding. To clearly outline the prioritization criteria/considerations, funding envelopes (over the short, medium

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and long term) and phasing would aid in the transparency and equality process for municipalities and the public.

4. Opportunities for New Mobility

- a) *How should the RTP focus on emerging influences including carsharing, on-demand services and autonomous vehicles?*

The Region supports Metrolinx's inclusion of emerging influences in the next RTP and offers the following recommendations.

- 4.1 The Region recommends Metrolinx include more strategies/programs in the next RTP to shift travel from single occupant vehicles to sustainable modes of travel. In the next 10 to 15 years, Metrolinx will complete and implement a number of significant transportation projects that will provide people with more mobility choices. More programs/projects regarding how to ensure people will make more sustainable transportation choices would be beneficial. For example, first and last mile to and from major transit stations such as GO stations and mobility hubs continue to be an issue (insufficient parking). Paid parking or increasing parking fees may encourage some car drivers to use more sustainable transportation (carpool, transit, cycling, etc.) to access stations. However, programs need to be designed to discourage the return to single-occupant vehicle use. Income generated from parking management can be used to promote sustainable choices attracting users towards transit, walking, cycling and other sustainable modes for first and last mile.

The RTP is expected to have a planning horizon of 2041. Given current advancements, new technologies and mobility options will have increasing importance over this horizon.

Within its planning horizon (2016-2041), the Region's 2016 TMP outlines the autonomous vehicle (AV) will most likely become a mainstream mode of travel, which will present both challenges and opportunities for current transit systems. AVs have the potential to address some of the first and last mile challenges (gaps in transit services) with accessing rapid transit and the GO rail network. However, such potential solutions may also compete with conventional transit services.

Although there is no consensus about when fully functional and safe AVs will be operating on public roads, it is important for the GTHA to prepare for their implementation and to understand their implications in advance of their arrival. As such, although primary emphasis of the RTP should continue to focus on conventional transit/transportation network, the RTP should also adequately reflect implications of the changing transportation landscape on GTHA residents and municipalities.

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- 4.2 The Region recommends Metrolinx address the role of autonomous vehicles, emerging transportation and technology innovations and/or other private mobility options to ensure potential pilot projects are identified and initiated in partnership with the Region, local municipalities and other stakeholders.
- 4.3 The Region recommends the RTP recognize the need for the establishment of municipal working groups to identify and address emerging issues and new mobility options on an ongoing basis as technology and options continue to evolve.
- 4.4 The Region recommends the RTP address the need for data collection and sharing to support monitoring and reporting more frequently than every five years. This is especially important considering the subsequent work required to develop programs and policies to adequately leverage anticipated benefits of technological advances. As a rapidly evolving area of transportation and the expected rapid pace of change, the RTP will need to be responsive and flexible enough to accommodate these changes.
- 4.5 The Region recommends the RTP address opportunities for new mobility by taking into considering various scenarios with respect to adoption rates for car-sharing, on-demand services and autonomous vehicles. For example, the RTP is a 25-year plan, which will likely be updated every ten years. As such, it would benefit the RTP to describe or conceptually outline what an AV landscape might look like, including resulting volumes and rates of adoption. Industry experts agree there will be a phasing of AV adoption once the technology is mass marketed and available. As such, the RTP should plan scenarios and impacts on all modes of transportation, for example assuming varying levels of AV adoption over outlook years of 2031, 2036, 2041, etc.
- 4.6 The Region recommends the RTP consider the opportunity to remain flexible to adapt to new and emerging technologies as well as accelerating development and piloting of strategies and programs to address first and last mile travel. This will help facilitate transit use and potentially reduce impacts of transportation on the local context.

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