TORONTO REGION BOARD OF TRADE

Connect the Region

AN ADDENDUM TO THE BOARD'S SUPERLINX CONCEPT PAPER

"Whether you support Superlinx or something different, breaking gridlock can only happen when we work together to identify solutions… We need to move past identifying obstacles to transit expansion, capitalize on recent progress and finally commit to a level of coordination, evidence and sustainable funding – all mere promises and dreams, until now."

Jan De Silva, President & CEO, Toronto Region Board of Trade,
The Toronto Star, December 19, 2017

February 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Positioning the Toronto Region as a Global Champion
The Toronto Region Board of Trade is one of the largest and most influential chambers of commerce in North America. Our constant flow of ideas, people and introductions to city-builders and government officials firmly roots us as connectors for – and with – the business community. Backed by more than 13,500 members, we advocate on behalf of the business community for policy change to drive the growth and competitiveness of the Toronto region. We act as catalysts to make Toronto one of the most competitive and sought-after business regions in the world, which starts with the success of our members.

This report was written by Patrick Gill and Brian Kelcey.

INTRODUCTION

"I'll say [the Board's Superlinx proposal is] one of those things that makes all kinds of sense in theory but seems sketchier in practice."

Edward Keenan, The Toronto Star, November 1, 2018

"I get where they're coming from, it makes sense. But the problem that they're bringing up isn't going to be solved by this giant super agency."

Vincent Puhakka (TTCRiders), CBC News, November 4, 2018

In November 2017, the Toronto Region Board of Trade published a concept paper on transit governance reform to influence Metrolinx's draft *Regional Transportation Plan* and the electoral platforms of Ontario's three major political parties. The paper advanced the idea of putting a regional transit agency in charge of overseeing, planning, building and operating the region's transit services. The Board advanced this concept, dubbed Superlinx, in order to resolve four longstanding system challenges:

1. The lack of funding for transit construction, service and maintenance;
2. The lack of transit-oriented housing;
3. The slow speed of decision making and construction; and
4. The quality of service for transit riders (i.e. fare and service integration; first-and-last mile solutions to better connect people from their homes to their work or school).

This wasn't the first time the Board had called on policymakers for transit governance reform. Four years earlier, the Board encouraged municipal and provincial officials alike to strengthen the region's transit governance system and put forward four international models for consideration. Instead of letting the same problems persist for another four years, the Board decided it would renew its advocacy for transit governance reform and, this time, pick a deliberate governance model to drive thoughtful discussions and action.

The Board's Superlinx concept catalyzed an important discussion and helped keep transit issues front and centre during provincial and municipal elections in 2018. Although the Board's idea was well received (79% of respondents from a regional survey conducted by Environics Research in August 2018 expressed support for the Board's Superlinx proposal) some stakeholders had questions or concerns with aspects of the proposal. As such, the Board spent most of 2018 listening to stakeholder perspectives and thinking more about what else was required to implement a Superlinx model. This document not only responds to the major concerns the Board heard, but also advances further thinking about how the Ontario Government can leverage its transit uploading exercise to further integrate the region's transit systems.

One of the primary purposes of the Board's Superlinx concept was to enhance coordination of public transit across the Toronto region. To some, what the Board proposed a year ago was considered a radical shift. But the truth of the matter is, the Board was simply describing what Metrolinx was designed to do. In fact, the main parts of Board's Superlinx concept can be implemented through existing provincial legislation. The *Metrolinx Act* enables the regional transit authority to oversee local transit operations on a municipality's behalf. The *Planning Act* gives the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing the ability to zone Major Transit Station Areas for development and greater density. And the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* can be leveraged to better align transit and land use planning. These legislative tools have been in place for many years – the Board's Superlinx concept is merely the business community's way of saying we should use them.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT & CONSTRUCTION

"Superlinx is a real estate and construction company first, and an operating company second."

Steve Munro (@SwanBoatSteve), November 9, 2018

It's true the Board's Superlinx proposal focuses significantly on the development of transit-oriented real estate and the enhancement of existing transit infrastructure. The reason for this is fourfold. First, we've built too little transit infrastructure too slowly for residents for too long. Over the past 15-years only 33 kilometers of new heavy and light rail has opened for Torontonians versus 50 kilometers for Vancouverites – despite Toronto's population growing more than Vancouver's. Second, we have a housing crisis, and are not swiftly leveraging transit-oriented real estate, such as transit stations and parking lots, for new residential and social housing. For example, of ten TTC properties identified in 2002 for priority redevelopment, only two sites have been redeveloped. Third, we haven't methodically used transit-oriented real estate to help finance new transit infrastructure and service. The Board thinks it's smarter and fairer to raise new transit revenue from real estate transactions and commercial leases than from taxes. The Mass Transit Railway Corporation (MTR), Hong Kong's regional transit authority, is a compelling example of what's possible. MTR uses its real estate holdings, which account for 80% of its annual revenue, to pay for new construction and reduce the price of transit fares. If it doesn't begin leveraging transit-oriented real estate the City of Toronto will never fix its $23 billion unfunded transit infrastructure backlog. The fourth and final reason is

TTC Properties Identified for Priority Redevelopment in 2002	Status of Redevelopment
4050 Yonge Street	Not Redeveloped
2200 Yonge Street	Not Redeveloped
640 Lansdowne Avenue	Not Redeveloped
4804 Yonge Street	Yes Redeveloped
7 Spadina Road	Not Redeveloped
1627 Danforth Avenue	Not Redeveloped Yet
705 Warden Avenue	Not Redeveloped
777 Victoria Park Ave	Not Redeveloped
Islington Station Bus Terminal	Not Redeveloped
1100 Sheppard Ave W	Yes Redeveloped

because increasing the residential and commercial density of Major Transit Station Areas would help spur transit journeys and resolve some first and last mile challenges.

UPLOADING VS. AMALGAMATION

"The [Board] seeks to plunge us into a massive transit amalgamation."

Jennifer Keesmaat, The Toronto Star, December 7, 2017

When the Board released its recommendation to upload the region's municipal transit systems to the Province, some critics swiftly labeled the proposal as an effort to save money by amalgamating transit agencies. To be clear, achieving savings was never the goal of the Board's Superlinx proposal – the idea of putting a regional transit agency in charge of overseeing, planning, building and operating the region's transit services.

The process the Board used to develop its recommendation bears this out. Our Policy Team identified four specific, longstanding problems that required resolution in the region:

1. The lack of funding for transit construction, service and maintenance;
2. The lack of transit-oriented housing;
3. The slow speed of decision-making and construction; and
4. The quality of service for transit riders (i.e. fare and service integration; first-and-last mile solutions to better connect people from their homes to their work or school).

The Board considered which order of government responsible for transit service (municipal and provincial) was best positioned to resolve these challenges quickly. By virtue of its regional lens, legal authority and funding capacity, the Board's analysis concluded the provincial government was better positioned to change the status quo faster on all four fronts.

The Board's decision was not driven by the idea of painting every bus the same color, to cut talented local staff through a merger or to achieve fiscal efficiencies through economies of scale. In fact, the Board's Policy Team expected certain expenditures (such as salaries and benefits) would *increase* as a result of the uploading exercise. Rather than evaluating Superlinx as an amalgamation, the Board's recommendation is better assessed as a service and fiscal realignment – one that is reflective of the service upload initiated by the 2008 *Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review* (a process that created more than $580 million in savings for the City of Toronto in 2018 notes the Ontario Ministry of Finance).

On the question of how much actual system integration (as opposed to direction, standardization or coordination) is needed to deliver these benefits, the Board has more to say below.

SERVICE DELIVERY & INTEGRATION

"[Councillor Josh Colle] can't see the Province being better able to manage local services needs like bus routes."

CBC News, November 27, 2017

There is a clear distinction between *coordinating* public transit and *delivering* it. Over the past year, some stakeholders expressed their preference for keeping transit delivery in the hands of local operators – even though they acknowledge the need for greater coordination between local or regional transit agencies.

Even stakeholders who agreed with the case for uploading rapid transit (i.e. LRTs and subways) to the Province, still felt that management of surface transit (i.e. buses and streetcars) by a provincially run regional transit agency would remove important connections to local riders, governments and priorities. In the Board's own consultations with the Ontario Government on reforming transit governance, provincial officials gave us the same message – that uploading rapid transit was a priority, but provincial management of surface transit was not, relative to rapid transit construction and coordination of rapid transit between systems.

The Board's Superlinx proposal did propose having a regional transit agency run local transit systems. The Board still supports this, and most of its advocates and advisors do too. Contrary to claims in the last year of debate, many local transit systems (particularly in Europe) are managed by a single regional agency (provincial, state, county or municipal) providing consistent surface and rapid transit service across a broad urban region and across municipal borders.

However, the Board acknowledged in countless interviews and discussions after Superlinx was released that **as long as the goals of single regional system are achieved, the Board is agnostic on whether a regional transit authority (like Metrolinx) operates that surface transit directly**. The alternative is to contract delivery to existing operators (such as VIVA or the TTC) instead. In fact, the Board hinted at this in its initial concept paper – noting that service contracts with local agencies would be one approach to manage a smooth transition into a regional agency.

The more the Board raised this alternative with stakeholders, the more a contract delivery model seemed to answer critics' concerns about local governance, service standards, financial flexibility and input, without compromising on the need to plug local systems into a more regionalized system with provincial financing. As exemplified by the following chart, contracting *regionalized* transit to a series of operators is a tested approach in many European jurisdictions. Working with transit experts, the Board identified two specific jurisdictions worth closer inspection as potential models to learn from: Frankfurt Rhine-Main being one, and Greater London the other. The Board encourages relevant stakeholders to seriously consider whether similar service delivery models, which have been used for years, could work here, especially given the comparable size and service areas for the largest models.

Select European Contract Practices									
Urban area	**Population** (millions)	**Transport modes concerned**			**Contract award procedure**		**Risks allocated to the operator**		
		Bus	**Tram**	**Rapid**	**Direct**	**Competitive**	**Costs**	**Revenues**	**Other incentives**
Amsterdam Direct award to public operator with competitive threat	0.82								
Barcelona Direct award to public operator	1.6								
Brussels Direct award to public operator	1.2								
Budapest Direct award to public operator	1.7								
Krakow Direct award to public operator without exclusivity	0.76								
Dijon Tendered network management contract	0.15								
Dublin Tendered route contract with incentives	0.52								
Frankfurt RM. Tendered route bundle contracts	5								
Leeds Quality partnership within free market	0.47								
London Tendering of gross-cost bus route contracts and rail contracts with incentives	8.1								
Lyon Tendered network management contract	0.5								
Manchester Tendering non-commercial routes within free market	0.51								
Munich Tendering or route contracts	1.4								
Madrid Tramway concession	3.1								
Porto Metro concession	0.21								
Prague Direct award to public operator	1.2								
Rome Direct award and partial tendering	2.8								
Stockholm Tendered route bundles gross-cost contracts	0.96								
Warsaw Tendering of route contracts	1.7								

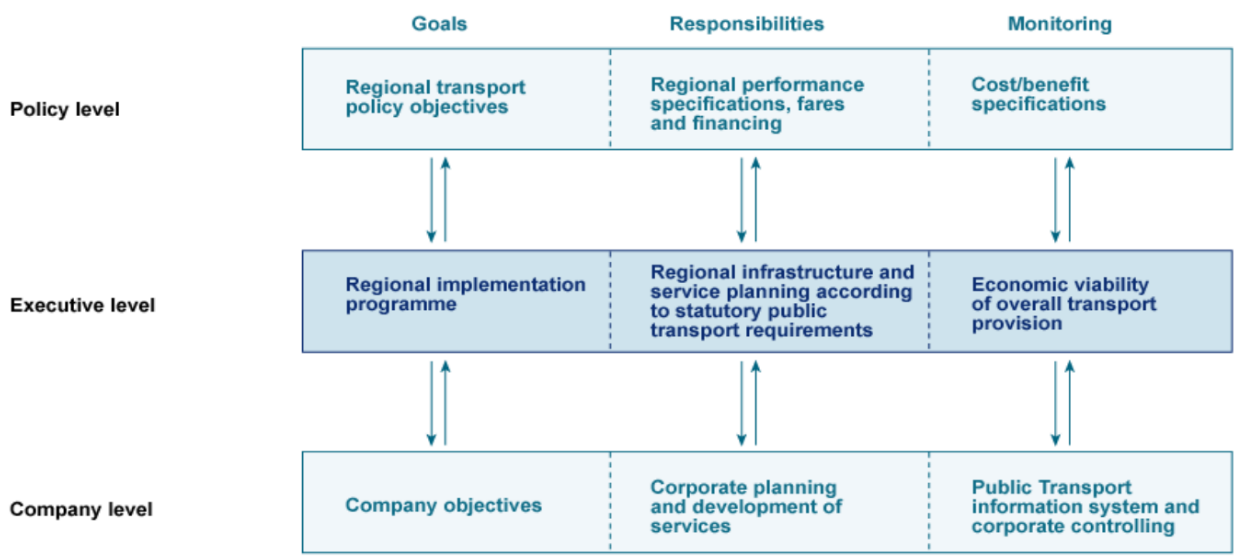
Sources: Contracting in Urban Public Transport. The European Commission, 2008
Wikipedia, 2016 - 2018

Comparing Jurisdictions: Frankfurt Rhine-Main vs. Greater Toronto & Hamilton Area				
Regional Transit Authority	**Residents**	**Size**	**Passengers**	**Stakeholders**
Rhein-Main Verkehrsverbund	5.8 million inhabitants living in the network area	The size of the network area is 14,000 km²	754 million annual passengers	A consortium of 15 regional authorities, 11 cities and the State of Hesse
Metrolinx	7.2 million inhabitants living in the network area (GTHA)	The size of the network area is 8,262 km² (GTHA)	71 million annual passengers	An agency of the Ontario Government to coordinate and integrate all modes of transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area – an area that includes 26 local municipalities and 4 municipal regions.

Rhein-Main Verkehrsverbund (RMV) is the regional transport association for the metropolitan region of Frankfurt Rhine-Main. Established in 1995, RMV is overseen by 15 districts, 11 major cities and the State of Hesse. It is responsible for planning, organising and financing transport services in this region. Responsibility for rail and bus service have been assigned to RMV by law.

To carry out this responsibility, RMV orders and purchases transport services from over 150 transport providers. The legal framework for local transport services in the State of Hesse allows for the separation of the planning and commissioning of services on the one hand, and the delivery of services on the other – thereby establishing RMV's role as a contractor of transport services, and intermediary between policymakers and service providers. It is also noteworthy that when established in 1995, RMV's fare system replaced more than 100 different fare systems in the network with a single integrated model.

Local transport in the region is supported by three levels: a policy-making level (the State of Hesse), an executive level (RMV & Local Transport Organizations) and a company level. The following model illustrates the integration of RMV into the organisational structure of the local passenger transport sector.



Source: Rhein-Main Verkehrsverbund, 2019

Comparing Jurisdictions: Greater London vs. Greater Toronto & Hamilton Area				
Regional Transit Authority	**Residents**	**Size**	**Passengers**	**Stakeholders**
Transport for London	8.7 million inhabitants living in the network area (GLA)	The size of the network area is 1,579 km^2 (GLA)	1.35 billion annual passengers	A body of the Greater London Authority, which represents 32 boroughs and the City of London
Metrolinx	7.2 million inhabitants living in the network area (GTHA)	The size of the network area is 8,262 km^2 (GTHA)	71 million annual passengers	An agency of the Ontario Government to coordinate and integrate all modes of transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area – an area that includes 26 local municipalities and 4 municipal regions.

Transport for London (TfL) is the government authority responsible for Greater London's transport system. Established in 1999 by the Greater London Authority, a regional governance body with jurisdiction over 32 boroughs and the City of London.

TfL oversees and runs most aspects of Greater London's transport system – such as principal roads, various rail networks and different forms of surface transport. Transport for London's underlying services are delivered by a mixture of wholly-owned subsidiaries and private sector franchisees and licensees. For instance, TfL has individual contracts for each of its bus routes – more than 700 in total. Transport for London is also jointly responsible for commissioning the construction of the new Crossrail/Elizabeth line with the United Kingdom's Department of Transport. Transport for London recently franchised the operation of the Crossrail/Elizabeth line to MTR Corporation Limited. Importantly, TfL has had a coordinated electronic payment system since 2003.

A contract-for-service model, such as the ones described above, also address another common concern. Some suburban and exurban stakeholders worry that uploading will lead to property taxes from one jurisdiction, subsidizing another jurisdiction's local transit – although unlikely given the existing distribution of subsidies and service levels across the region.

However, with a contract-for-service model, local property taxes could and should be credited to each provincial-municipal contract locally, rather than uploaded directly under provincial control as contemplated in a single regional agency. This approach clearly allows municipal governments to stay in charge of local surface transit and boost service up, or step it down depending on local needs. Even if this is the outcome, municipal investments in surface transit within a regionalized system should still be standardized and systematized so that different gradients of service are clear, and so that provincial capital support for local components can also be standardized based on various gradients of service.

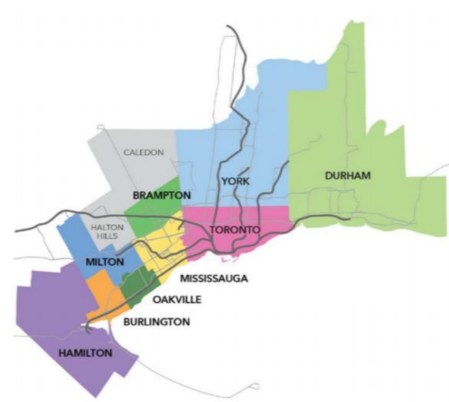
In summary, the Board recommends the Province consider contracting service delivery back to existing municipal transit agencies (such as VIVA or the TTC) instead of running service directly through a regional transit agency. (This may require a governance structure that differs from the Board's original Superlinx proposal.) A contract-for-service model is widely used in Europe and should be considered for strengthening service integration in the region.

FARE INTEGRATION

"I don't think this council would support a different fare from Scarborough, a different fare from North York. That system would benefit my residents in Liberty Village, but I don't think that would be right."

Councillor Mike Layton, Toronto.com, November 7, 2017

Integrating the region's transit fare systems further is needed to simplify transit commutes, grow transit journeys and deliver economic opportunity to residents. Last year, the Board indicated that its Superlinx concept (the idea of putting a regional transit agency in charge of overseeing, planning, building and operating the region's transit services) could help accelerate the integration of the region's fare systems by establishing a unified platform for action.



There are currently 11 different ways fares are determined in the GTHA, with each transit service provider setting its own rules and prices

Source: Metrolinx, 2017

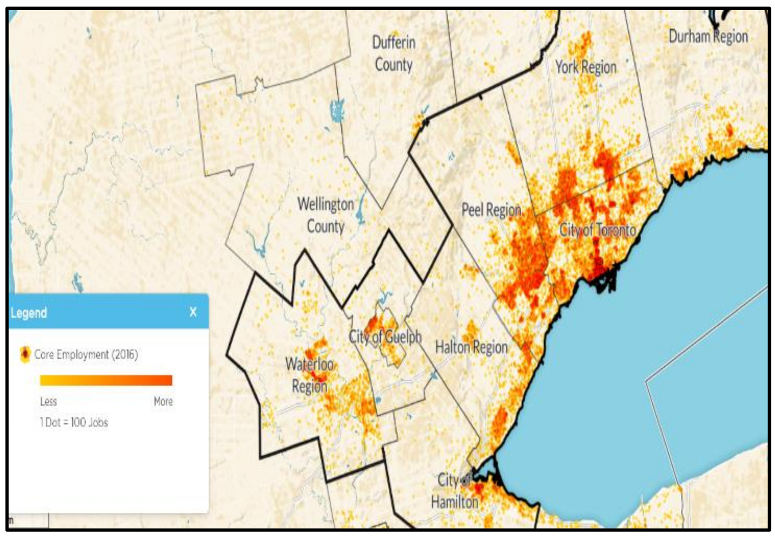
Most stakeholders who spoke with the Board agreed this policy, which was also a priority of *The Big Move* in 2008, is overdue and urgently needed. Yet stakeholders from urban, suburban and exurban areas (like Durham and Halton) worry that fare integration cannot be achieved fairly. They worry that a blanket fare-by-distance model would penalize residents who depend on transit for mobility or discourage transit journeys from residents on the periphery of the network. The Board shares the same concerns but has an idea to resolve this impasse and build consensus among stakeholders.

Given all available options for integrating transit fares, the Board believes the primary objective should be to create an integrated payment platform that offers transit riders smart pricing options to grow transit journeys and help residents access opportunities (like jobs or school). Higher transit ridership across the system is the best way to deliver value from the huge capital investment required to expand our region's transit network. The greatest cost to the system is the overhead needed to maintain and operate a complex transit network, not the incremental kilometers that passengers travel once they enter that network. Pricing should respond accordingly.

To be clear, this means the Board would oppose a blanket fare-by-distance model for three reasons. The first reason is fairness. As rising housing costs push residents further out of Toronto's downtown core and further away from other regional employment hubs, fare-by-distance policies penalize these individuals by reducing their discretionary income or limiting their employment opportunities. The second reason is ridership. Forcing individuals living on the periphery of the region's transit network to pay higher fares will discourage, rather than encourage, ridership growth to major employment hubs – especially those beyond Toronto's downtown core. The third reason is around the issue of economic sustainability. If service workers cannot access jobs affordably, our regional economy will have less capacity to deliver those services where demand for them is highest. In its earliest days, the Board and other similar chambers of commerce were advocates for streetcars, buses and subways systems to protect the diversity and accessibility of our labour market.

The Board believes forthcoming negotiations to upload Toronto's subway system should be leveraged to integrate fare systems across the region. As policy decisions about fare integration are being made, the Board also encourages relevant stakeholders to consider adopting smart pricing options. After listening to transit experts, the Board has identified potential smart pricing options that would be beneficial for residents and businesses alike.

Smart pricing simply means setting fares at a level that is attractive compared to other transportation modes. It requires setting prices high enough to pay for good-quality transit, but low enough to encourage people to take transit. Based on the advice of transit stakeholders, the Board thinks smart pricing should be applied in Toronto in the following ways to grow transit journeys and to help residents access opportunities:



Source: Neptis Geoweb

- **The Province should divide the region into fare zones (potentially a couple of zones per municipality) and permit a fare zone buffer (the Board proposes a "2 for 1" approach).** Such an approach hopefully means that no one would be worse off than they are now. Fare zones are used by many international cities (such as Amsterdam, Melbourne, Manchester, Montreal, Hamburg and London) and are easy for transit riders to understand. They work by increasing riders' fares slightly with every zone crossed after the first. GO train fares are priced in a similar fashion. If fare zones are more generally adopted in the GTHA, they should be designed with journeys in and out of employment hubs in mind and should take the same approach as London, whereby the system applies only to rapid modes of transit (i.e. trains and subways). **Surface transit vehicles (i.e. buses and streetcars) should offer a flat fare** to avoid penalizing transit riders forced to live further away from jobs because of high housing costs. Additionally, **transit riders shouldn't pay twice if transferring** from surface transit to rapid transit – instead they should simply be charged the higher of the two fares (this would require additional fare gates to be added to transit stations).

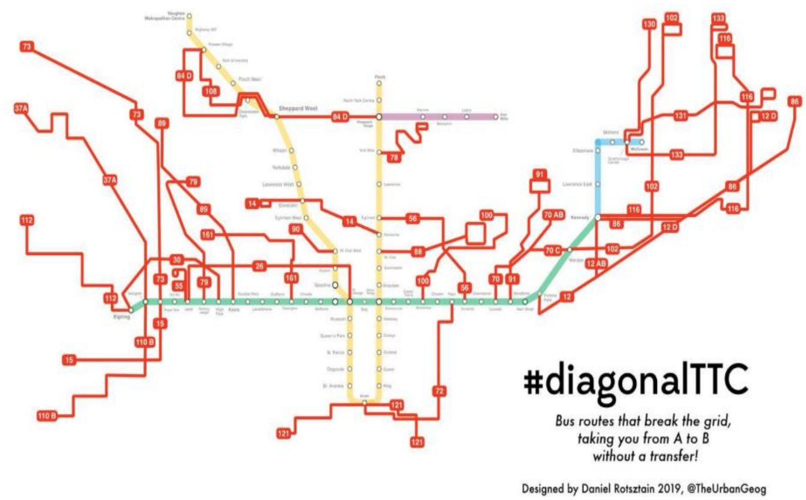
- **The Board supports a "2 for 1" deal on fare zones.** With this approach, transit riders could travel across two moderately-sized zones, even crossing municipal boundaries, without incurring a fare increase. Travel to a third, fourth and fifth zone would trigger incremental fare increases to reflect the cost of the distance travelled. Hypothetically, this would allow flat fare travel on existing networks between Kennedy station in Scarborough and downtown Toronto, or between Brampton and the Airport Employment Zone in Mississauga.

Total Daily Demand by Market Type

Market Category	Market Type	% of total GTHA transit trips	Local	RT	Local-RT	Regional	Local-Regional	RT-Regional
Trips within one MSP service area	Downtown Toronto	4.4%	33,800	32,700	16,900	200[1]	-	-
	Between Downtown and Non-Downtown Toronto	28.9%	62,600	198,200	265,300	18,900	-	1,200
	Non-Downtown Toronto	31.9%	352,700	54,900	192,400	1,800	1,200	400
	Internal to One 905 MSP area	12.6%	231,900	-	-	4,700	2,400	-
Cross boundary trips	Between 905 and Downtown Toronto	13.1%	1,500	29,800	32,100	138,300	14,700	31,000
	Between 905 and Non-Downtown Toronto	7.4%	71,900	5,400	26,400	17,800	9,900	8,400
	Between 905 MSP areas	1.8%	21,500	-	-	6,500	4,900	-
	% of total GTHA transit trips		41.0%	17.0%	28.2%	9.9%	1.7%	2.2%

Source: Metrolinx, 2016

- **Lower fares should be charged for surface transit vehicles (i.e. buses and streetcars)**. Several international cities use this model, including London, whereby the slower the transit journey, the less it costs riders – and vice versa. The rationale for this approach is straightforward. First, pricing transit, in part, based on the experience of a rider's journey, is a tool for maximizing transit usage and existing transit infrastructure. Second, the most accessible form of transit in most cities, particularly for lower-income residents, is buses. Third, according to McGill University researchers, the best way to boost transit ridership is by incenting increased bus service and greater use of bus capacity. While Toronto doesn't have a redundant bus network like London, this smart pricing tactic could help encourage short distance travel in pockets of the City like Scarborough.



- **Daily spending caps should be set for transit riders.** Again, this approach is used by international cities, like London, to maximize transit usage and existing transit infrastructure. As in London, slower transit vehicles should have a different spending cap than faster transit vehicles (i.e. trains and subways). The caps should also adjust based on how many zones transit riders cross, and whether riders travel during the morning peak.

- **Lower fares should be charged for transit before or after the morning peak.** Visit any transit station in London at 9:25 a.m. and you'll notice people waiting to save up to 40% on cheaper fares that begin at 9:30 a.m. Even if 5% of transit riders travelled before or after the morning peak, the most intensive crowding chokepoints would experience immediate relief.

FEDERAL FUNDING

"We must stop measuring the federal government's urban impact by dollars spent or ribbons cut. Canada should follow the example of its OECD counterparts, by funding urban infrastructure plans."

Canadian Global Cities Council, February 13, 2018

In the original Superlinx report, the Board noted that federal funding for transit could flow to a new regional transit agency, in much the same way that Vancouver's Translink is often the direct partner for federal funds with its own transit initiatives. In a related report, developed for the Canadian Global Cities Council (CGCC), called *Planning for an Urban Future: Our Call for a National Urban Strategy*, the Board's policy advisors argued that federal funding should flow to city-region infrastructure plans, rather than on a project by project basis, to allow for more flexible financing models and to permit better balancing of changes to funding in the event that priorities shifted from one government to the next. (The CGCC report also called for an increase in federal infrastructure funding to flow through that model).

An important policy question arises from either argument. In 2016, the Board joined other urban organizations in praising the federal government after it announced plans to link repair funding for transit infrastructure to a formula that weighted existing ridership at 70% against 30% by population, rather than on a strict per capita basis. The Board celebrated this policy because it was logical: cities with high transit ridership also had more transit infrastructure to maintain. However, in the future, as more federal dollars shift back to new project construction, it will be important to consider adjusting this formula, either by further softening the high prioritization of ridership in the formula by some reasonable percentage, or by setting aside a portion of each city-region's transit funding for ridership development.

The challenge is obvious, urbanists have repeatedly criticized Metrolinx for a lack of ambition, arguing that long term plans for the Toronto transit region assume little or no change in transit mode share well past the next decade. Meanwhile, many of the same stakeholders insist that a more regionalized transit model would be an attack on Toronto, arguing that most transit resources should be concentrated where riders already are, even though more resources are needed to move the needle if we want higher ridership in suburban areas.

It's precisely with this dilemma in mind that the Board flags the need for a future round of discussions on this point: can federal transit funding formulas be adapted to help incent transit construction ahead of ridership trends, to grow rather than merely sustain existing patterns of ridership? Where is that balance? And if so, how can federal funding help to strike that balance? Answers to those questions will be important to the shape, focus and success of any regionalized transit model that develops from the political debates underway in 2019.

PROJECT CONFIRMATION

"Is this government going to build the Hurontario LRT and provide transit relief to residents?"

NDP MPP Jessica Bell, Mississauga.com, November 13, 2018

One question that has been asked repeatedly during the debate about transit uploading, is the question of fulfilling existing infrastructure commitments. Some of these projects have been controversial. Hamilton's LRT survived several debates at City Council before the election of 2018 confirmed public support for its construction. Several politicians criticized the Finch West LRT and proposed alternatives. The Scarborough Subway Extension also remains controversial, even though it has been endorsed by three orders of government and three political parties.

To be clear, if the provincial upload of Toronto's subways is the first step toward a more regional model, there is no reason planning and construction cannot continue for all these projects and others (like the Downtown Relief Line). The intent of the Board's Superlinx proposal was to marshal all of the region's transit resources, not to substitute one government's people and planning for another's. Nobody is proposing to fire or lay off staff, nor to revoke contracts simply for the sake of rerouting them to another government. The transition from one model to another need not and should not disrupt work that is already underway.

In keeping with that thinking, since the 2018 Ontario Election, the Board has encouraged Ontario Government officials to maintain commitments on all four LRT lines that could be considered in progress due to ongoing RFPs, design or construction work. These lines are the Hamilton LRT, the Hurontario LRT, the Finch West LRT and the Waterfront LRT. It is important that these projects proceed to help regionalize the capacity of our transit network, and to support better dispersal of jobs, homes and trips throughout the region. The Board has also encouraged Ontario Government officials to reaffirm their support of a Downtown Relief Line (DRL) and quick relief options for riders until the DRL is completed next decade. Additionally, the Board supports maintaining planned and funded GO stations (like the planned extension to Bowmanville).

If the Ontario Government's uploading plan is predicated on the belief that it can sustain more aggressive debt financing than its municipal government counterparts (to the degree that it could fund more than one subway on its own power) the same reasoning would suggest the Ontario Government can sustain the relatively modest cost to complete existing LRTs already on the books. If the Ontario Government intends to proceed with these infrastructure projects (and the Board believe it does), it would stabilize transit and development planning if the Ontario Government were to publicly confirm this and celebrate the transit, urban and economic development benefits of doing so as soon as possible.

GOODS MOVEMENT

"Bill 57 removes the requirement that Metrolinx transportation planning take into consideration all modes of transportation."

Jamie Stuckless, Blog, December 3, 2018

If passed, Bill 57 means Metrolinx would no longer have responsibility for improving goods movement within the GTHA. Considering the significant number of monumental tasks Metrolinx must deliver upon, allowing the agency to focus on transit related services seems reasonable to the Board. It also makes sense to shift this responsibility to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, which is well positioned to create a much-needed goods movement strategy for the GTHA. Improving the movement of goods across our region is of great importance to the Board, as it will reduce traffic congestion and improve the region's competitiveness and productivity. According to the Board's *Movement of Goods* series, one million tonnes of goods are delivered throughout the region each day. Moreover, the Board estimates that road congestion currently adds $400 million in costs to our region's goods every year. Therefore, the Board would like to see the Ontario Minister of Transportation bring forward a regional goods movement strategy by 2020. Among other things, this strategy should be multi-modal in scope and have strategies to address the rise of e-commerce activity.

CONCLUSION

"Public transit has never been so expensive, so unreliable, inconvenient or difficult. Suddenly, it seems, our decades-long failure to invest in maintenance and update the system has caught up with Toronto. Can we make up for those lost years? Do we have the political will to reach that deep?"

Christopher Hume, The Toronto Star, January 28, 2019

There's a great opportunity to get better results for transit riders if city councillors and provincial officials can focus on results over rhetoric in the debate over transit uploading. Unfortunately, rhetoric is prevailing. Some insist only the City can build and deliver transit service. Others argue provincial agencies can do a better and faster job. The truth is both the TTC and Metrolinx deliver great service on most routes daily. Yet, if the debate continues over which system is in better shape to take over Toronto's subways, the finger-pointing will go on and we'll have squandered an opportunity to fund a better transit network for riders. Both the TTC and Metrolinx have made mistakes, but it's time to move on from these and begin negotiation how Toronto, the region and the province can benefit from transit uploading.

The main reason city councillors should consider uploading is because the Ontario Government is structurally better-equipped with revenues and financing to maintain and expand Toronto's transit capacity. Recently, city councillors were informed that $23 billion of the TTC's capital needs are unfunded – with millions more needed to fix other assets owned by the City, such as its social housing stock. Given Toronto's fiscal situation, the only hope for addressing these needs is significant provincial intervention.

The other reason city councillors should consider uploading is because of Toronto's housing crisis. Most people agree transit-oriented real estate, such as transit stations and parking lots, should be tapped for new residential and social housing. The Ontario Government, which as the legal authority to swiftly redevelop public land, has given every indication it wants this too.

If you care about our transit system, the status quo is not an option anyone should be defending. For 20 years, mayors, transit advocates and urbanists have fought to shift stable revenue and planning authority to where most of the transit is – the municipalities. The Board proudly participated in this advocacy. Yet, despite everyone's effort, maintaining and improving our transit system has been a struggle. That why the Board thinks if we can't move resources to municipalities, let's flip the problem around and move transit oversight to the order of government that has the fiscal capacity and planning authority needed to improve the system.

The Toronto region gained nearly two million people over the past 20 years. It's expected to grow by the same number of people over the next 20 years. It's time to stop debating and start activating a solution. We need a regional strategy and network for our growing number of residents who live within municipal boundaries, but need seamless access to their jobs across and through the 10 different municipal regions that comprise Canada's largest economic zone.