

3.3 Develop a single transportation authority in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA)

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The OCC is calling on the newly elected government to develop a single transportation authority in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).
- A single transportation authority such as Metrolinx (or another, new regional transit authority) would operate to implement and develop transportation planning and infrastructure in a cost effective and timely manner.
- A single transportation authority (that brings together regional and municipal transit) would enhance network connectivity and fare integration, making a more sustainable, attractive and efficient transportation system in Ontario.

Currently, Metrolinx is the transportation authority responsible for major public transit and transportation projects in the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area (GTHA). In 2008, Metrolinx released its Big Move report outlining a 25-year, multi-regional transportation plan that would span the GTHA. Unfortunately, implementation of this plan has been hampered by the governance structure of municipal transportation authorities and a lack of capital funding.

A primary concern for Ontario has been the financing of transportation infrastructure, such as the Scarborough subway or Brampton Light Rail Transit (LRT), which has culminated in public discrepancies among the three levels of government with respect to responsibility to pay. This has contributed to an estimated \$30 billion capital funding gap to build a rapid regional transportation network, notwithstanding the billions more needed for operations, maintenance and rehabilitation.¹

Economic development and renewal are dependent on high quality, multimodal transportation services.

In order to ensure our transportation network supports the needs of a growing economy, the Ontario government should establish a single transportation authority to serve the GTHA. Under this plan, authority for Toronto's subway and light rail lines would be uploaded to a regional transit authority. This single authority would operate to implement and develop transportation planning and infrastructure in a cost effective and timely manner.

An ancillary benefit of a single transportation body would be fare integration and network connectivity, making transfers easy and efficient. Connectivity would not stop at any municipal boundary, rather, it would be continuous throughout the GTHA aided by "smart" card technology. A fully integrated fare system would create a seamless and affordable transit network, and help alleviate wider-region traffic congestion and gridlock. A single transportation authority in the GTHA would help ensure a sustainable, attractive and efficient transportation network.

¹ Move the GTHA. *Are We There Yet?* 2016. <http://moverthegtha.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/AreWeThereYet.pdf>