



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: Committee of the Whole  
From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development  
Report: #2022-COW-30  
Date: December 14, 2022

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**Subject:**

Update on the Approval of the Lakeshore East GO Extension to Bowmanville

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**Recommendation:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

That this report be received for information.

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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Regional Council information on the status of the approval and procurement of the Lakeshore East GO Extension to Bowmanville (the Extension) and the Preliminary Design Business Case that was released by Metrolinx to the public on April 28, 2022.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The Extension has a long history dating back over 30 years, when GO Transit carried out its first Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for heavy rail train service to Bowmanville.
- 2.2 A chronology of the Extension prior to 2019 is set out in Attachment 1.

### 3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 On May 6, 2022, Council received report 2022-INFO-38 [Lakeshore East GO Extension to Bowmanville](#), notifying Council of the tabling of the provincial budget and posting of the procurement for the Lakeshore East GO Extension to Bowmanville. The report also notified Council of the public release of the Preliminary Design Business Case (PDBC) for the Extension project, along the Council preferred CP rail corridor alignment.
- 3.2 On November 13, 2019, Committee of the Whole received a report [Advancing Rapid Transit Implementation and Transit Oriented Development in Durham Region](#) (Report #2019-COW-26), reporting to Council on the Extension and the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Evaluation. Council subsequently resolved, among other matters;
- a. That Metrolinx be advised that Durham Region supports the extension of all day GO train service along the Lakeshore East line, including new stations at Thornton's Corners, Central Oshawa, Courtice and Central Bowmanville.
  - b. That Regional Planning staff be directed to accelerate the review and development of policies, including delineations and density targets for Major Transit Station Areas under "Envision Durham".
  - c. That a Rapid Transit Implementation/Transit Oriented Development Office be established for Durham Region.
- 3.3 On June 12, 2019, Committee of the Whole received a report [2019-COW-19 GO East Extension Update and Transit Oriented Development Evaluation](#) regarding the status of the Extension. Council subsequently resolved, among other matters:
- a. That a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Evaluation exercise be undertaken to examine the potential impact of route alignments on private sector investment at proposed GO Station locations along the GO East Extension to Bowmanville.
  - b. That Metrolinx and the Province be requested to reaffirm their commitment to the CP alignment approved in 2011 through the Oshawa to Bowmanville Rail Service Expansion and Rail Maintenance Facility Transit Project Assessment Process Environmental Assessment.

#### **4. Approval of the Extension**

- 4.1 On December 22, 2021, Regional Council adopted Amendment No. 186 to the Durham Regional Official Plan which establishes Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs) around seven of the Region's existing and future GO Train Stations. The amendment provides supporting implementation policies including a minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare, and housing types and built form that will support intensification and transit-oriented mixed-use development. The amendment is currently pending approval by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.
- 4.2 On April 28, 2022, the Minister of Finance tabled a Budget Communication document, and within the Capital Plan announced planned investments over the next 10 years totaling \$158.8 billion, including \$20.0 billion in the current 2022–23 fiscal year. The Extension to Bowmanville was included in this list of investments.
- 4.3 On April 28, 2022, Metrolinx posted the [Bowmanville Rail Service PDBC](#) dated April, 2020 and related [Technical Memorandum](#) dated March 2021. Additional information is available on the [BMV Extension webpage](#).
- 4.4 The PDBC identifies, among other matters, the minimum service levels, preferred alignment, planned station stops, and reflects the updated Initial Business Case and Regional Council's November 2019 resolution.
- 4.5 The primary change in the PDBC, (as documented in the Technical Memorandum), is that the project now includes twinning the existing GM spur over Highway 401 resulting in the Thornton's Corners Station shifting to the east.
- 4.6 On April 28, 2022, Metrolinx posted a Request for Proposal (RFP) on a public bidding website (Merx), to procure a Construction Management at Risk contract for the Bowmanville Expansion Project (RFP-2021-CMLE-347).
- 4.7 Schedule 5 of the RFP contains the scope of work. It sets out generally all the works in the rail corridor that would result in the Extension. This means that Metrolinx has contracted out the full value of the project, except for the stations that are to be delivered through the Metrolinx Market Driven Strategy. This Strategy requires third parties design and pay for the stations. The stations can be added into the Metrolinx contract if third parties are identified.

- 4.8 On August 9, 2022, the province approved the provincial budget that was tabled on April 28, 2022, including the Extension project.
- 4.9 On October 28, 2022, the RFP for the Construction Management at Risk contract for the Bowmanville Expansion Project (RFP-2021-CMLE-347) closed where a short list of bidders will be qualified, and the procurement will proceed to Step 2 of the RFP.

## **5. Benefits of the Extension**

- 5.1 The benefits of the Extension for the region are significant, and have taken on even greater import as Durham plans for post pandemic economic recovery:
- Enables an unprecedented level of new housing, jobs, employment space, and private sector investment in Durham Region at future transit-oriented communities.
  - Provides an opportunity to increase housing supply and create jobs and economic development.
  - Directs transit investment to planned growth areas that reflect provincial and local planning policy.
  - Contains strong ridership projections that will provide much needed congestion relief along Highway 401, allowing for higher productivity and more efficient movement of goods.
  - Uses transit to encourage private-sector housing construction and aligns closely with the province's commitment to increasing housing supply.
  - Supports significant provincial investment in three post-secondary institutions: Durham College, Ontario Tech University, and Trent University Durham.

## **6. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

- 6.1 The Extension will improve mobility and travel options, supports transit-oriented development in the Protected Major Transit Station Areas and aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Goal 1 Environmental Sustainability: Objective 1.5: Expand sustainable and active transportation.
- b. Goal 2 Community Vitality: Objective 2.1: Revitalize existing neighbourhoods and build complete communities that are walkable, well-connected, and have a mix of attainable housing.
- c. Goal 3 Economic Prosperity: Objective 3.3: Enhance communications and transportation networks to better connect people and move goods efficiently.
- d. Goal 4 Social Investment: Objective 4.1: Revitalize community housing and improve housing choice, affordability and sustainability.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 The Region will continue to collaborate with its municipal and provincial partners, through established Working Groups, seeking Council approval for matters as necessary.
- 7.2 The Region will continue to support Oshawa and Clarington in advancing planning policy and zoning work for the Protected Major Transit Station Areas.

## **8. Attachments**

Attachment #1: Project Chronology

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Brian Bridgeman MCIP, RPP  
Commissioner of Planning and Economic  
Development

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

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Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer

## Project Chronology

- 1.1 Since 1991, the Regional Official Plan (ROP) has recognized an easterly extension of the GO Rail service to Bowmanville. The extension includes a crossing of Highway 401 from the CN Kingston line to the CPR Belleville line between Thornton Road and Stevenson Road, with a terminus in Bowmanville, west of Regional Road 57. This alignment was based on an Environmental Assessment (EA) study completed by GO Transit in the early 1990s.
- 1.2 In November 2008, the Regional Transportation Plan for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, 'The Big Move,' was adopted by Metrolinx. The easterly extension of GO Rail service to Bowmanville was included in The Big Move as one of the top transit priorities for Metrolinx within the first 15 years.
- 1.3 In February 2011, the "Oshawa to Bowmanville Rail Service Expansion and Rail Maintenance Facility Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP) EA" was approved. The EA identified the preferred alignment for the extension, including four new stations (Thornton's Corners, Central Oshawa, Courtice and Bowmanville), a potential station site at Grandview Street/Bloor Street, train lay-over sites as well as the location of the proposed East Rail Maintenance Facility. The CP Belleville corridor, running north of Highway 401, was identified as the preferred alignment for the Extension consistent with the ROP. The crossing of Highway 401 was proposed at a location further to the west than was identified through the previous EA study and shown in the ROP.
- 1.4 In February 2013, in its comments on The Big Move Update and Next Wave, Regional Council recommended that "the extension of GO Rail service to connect to the Oshawa Mobility Hub and to Bowmanville remain as the top priority Regional Transit expansion project for the Region of Durham."
- 1.5 In July 2014, Metrolinx acquired the former Knob Hill Farms property to accommodate part of the future Central Oshawa GO Station site.
- 1.6 In June 2016, the Province announced the Lakeshore East GO Rail extension to Bowmanville by 2024, with service in the morning and afternoon peak periods in the peak direction of travel (i.e., four trains westbound in the morning and four trains eastbound in the afternoon).
- 1.7 In May 2017, the Province released the updated Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017), which included a newly modified transit schedule (Schedule 5) showing the Oshawa to Bowmanville GO Rail service extension as a "Committed GO Transit Rail Extension project".
- 1.8 In October 2017, Metrolinx officially began work on the EA Addendum for the extension, updating the 2011 EA study. Preliminary design work undertaken by Metrolinx determined that an EA Addendum was necessary due to shifts in new track alignment and corresponding bridges/culverts, redesign of the new stations and layover facility based on updated design and operation standards and adding the additional grade separation for Thornton Road across the CP Belleville line.
- 1.9 In December 2017, the Durham Transportation Master Plan (TMP) was approved by Regional Council. The TMP includes a Higher Order Transit Network, in which the Extension is a critical component and is well integrated with other transit service and road infrastructure improvements.

- 1.10 In March 2018, the Metrolinx Board of Directors unanimously adopted the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (2041 RTP) for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). The GO Train Expansion to Bowmanville on the north side of Highway 401 is identified as an In Delivery Transit Project, meaning that it is either under construction or in the engineering design stage.
- 1.11 In April 2018, Metrolinx announced that park and ride lots will be constructed at the future Central Oshawa and Courtice GO Station sites as interim facilities until the GO Stations are opened for the Extension in 2024. These park and ride lots opened in February 2019.
- 1.12 In November 2018, Metrolinx released the GO Expansion Full Business Case for the overall GO Rail network, which indicates that another Business Case is required to re-evaluate the Extension. Work on the EA Addendum and design was subsequently halted.
- 1.13 On November 29, 2018 Metrolinx provided a letter to its municipal partners regarding its Transit Oriented Development, Market Driven Approach advising that this review would include an assessment of stations that are not yet in delivery, including those proposed with the Lakeshore East GO Rail extension to Bowmanville. Among other matters, the letter states that:
- "Metrolinx has consistently planned for the integration of transit and land- use, and this new approach is an exciting opportunity to move this plan forward with each new GO station. Not only can this approach save tax dollars and exponentially grow transit ridership, it will create and leverage the true value of transit and deliver much more than just transit stations; it will deliver local integrated built environments that offer the services people want at the doorstep of where people will live, work and play."*
- 1.14 On December 6, 2018 the Metrolinx Board received a presentation "Delivering More: A Market Driven Strategy to Delivering Transit Infrastructure". Through this approach, Metrolinx would partner with third parties (e.g. municipalities, land developers, etc.) to deliver new or improved transit infrastructure wherein third parties would fund the design and construction of infrastructure, and Metrolinx would operate it.
- 1.15 In December 2018, Regional Council endorsed a Motion passed at the Planning and Economic Development Committee requesting the Provincial Government and Metrolinx to confirm the commitment to extend GO Rail service north of Highway 401 through Oshawa to Bowmanville by 2024 and proactively resolve all pending negotiations with CN and CP Rail, understanding this project has substantial economic and environmental benefits, will spur significant public and private investment, will create much needed job opportunities for the community both for the short and long term, has widespread community support - including from the residents, business community, development industry, Durham's post- secondary institutions, commuters, youth, and the agricultural community, and is embedded in the land use, transportation and transit plans of Oshawa, Clarington and the Region of Durham.
- 1.16 In February 2019, a Metrolinx report on major capital projects listed the Bowmanville Extension as a project in the EA and design phase with an approved budget for capital construction of \$550 M (2014\$) and an in-service date of 2024.
- 1.17 On April 10, 2019 the Metrolinx Board of Directors directed Metrolinx staff to advance the TOD Program. The implementation of the TOD Program, in partnership with Infrastructure Ontario (IO), will be initiated by soliciting third party interest for TOD at 12 new station locations that were identified through preliminary

design business cases in 2018. Six of the twelve stations are located in the City of Toronto along the Stouffville, Lakeshore East and Kitchener GO Rail lines tied to the SmartTrack program, while the other six are outside of Toronto on the Kitchener and Barrie GO Rail lines. None of the twelve stations are in Durham Region.

- 1.18 On May 9, 2019 the Regional Chair sent a letter to the Minister of Transportation and the Chair and Members of the Metrolinx Board that summarized the commitments made by the province and the rationale for the Bowmanville extension on the CP alignment.
- 1.19 On May 16, 2019 A Place to Grow, the revised Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan, 2019) came into effect, which shows the GO East extension to Bowmanville as a "Committed GO Transit Rail Extension".
- 1.20 On May 17, 2019 Metrolinx hosted a briefing with representatives from Durham Region, Clarington, Oshawa and Whitby to discuss four options now being proposed by Metrolinx for the Lakeshore East GO Rail Extension and advised that an updated Initial Business Case is in progress.
- 1.21 On May 21, 2019 Councils for the City of Oshawa and the Municipality of Clarington passed separate resolutions regarding the Lakeshore East GO Rail Extension, citing concerns with other route options being considered. Among other matters, they requested an open and transparent process for obtaining input from municipalities, residents, the development industry and other stakeholders; and requested information on the criteria and metrics to be used to evaluate options.