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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development and
Commissioner of Finance
Report: #2025-INFO-96
Date: December 19, 2025

Subject:

Release of Ontario Regulation [207/25](#) under the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023 and Preparation of the Transit Station Charge Background Study and By-law

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Background

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Regional Council that:

- a. On September 2, 2025, the Province released Ontario Regulation [207/25](#) under the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023;
- b. On December 1, 2025, the Minister of Infrastructure provided consent to the Region to proceed with preparing a Transit Station Charge Background Study (Attachment 1); and
- c. Regional staff will now proceed with preparing a Transit Station Charge Background Study and draft by-law, and conduct public consultation as authorized through [#2025-COW-20](#).

2. Background

2.1 The GO Lakeshore East Extension to Bowmanville is a long-standing priority for Durham Region, the City of Oshawa, the Municipality of Clarington, and the Province. It proposes a 20-kilometre extension of rail service from its current

terminus in Oshawa, along the CP Rail line, with four new GO Stations, two in the City of Oshawa and two in the Municipality of Clarington.

- 2.2 In 2018, the Province announced that while it would continue to pay for the cost of extending rail infrastructure, it would no longer pay for the design and construction of new GO stations. Following engagement with Durham landowners, no developer came forward to pay for and build one of the new GO stations. As such, the Region must take the initiative to ensure four new stations are operational on the opening day of service.
- 2.3 On December 4, 2023, the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023 received Royal Assent, enabling municipalities to support the delivery of new GO stations by paying for a portion of the costs of station design and construction upfront, and collecting a Transit Station Charge (TSC) levied on new development surrounding the proposed GO Stations. Durham Region expressed its interest in using the Act as a key funding tool to contribute towards four new GO Stations along the GO Lakeshore East Extension to Bowmanville.
- 2.4 To implement a Transit Station Charge, the Act requires the completion of a background study and a by-law to establish the amount of the charge and the charge collection area, which must also be approved by the Minister of Infrastructure.

3. Previous Reports & Decisions

- 3.1 On May 28, 2025, in anticipation of the release of the regulation to the Act, Regional Council considered Report #[2025-COW-20](#), which recommended a sole source procurement for the preparation of the GO Lakeshore East Extension Transit Station Charge Background Study and authorization to proceed with the background study and public consultation once the regulation was released.
- 3.2 On March 26, 2025, Regional Council unanimously endorsed a motion requesting the Province to expedite the release of the regulation to enable the Region to proceed with a TSC by-law (Attachment 2).
- 3.3 On September 25, 2024, Regional Council received a confidential briefing on the Durham Station Implementation Strategy and the interim findings of the GO Lakeshore East Transit Station Charge Economic Study.
- 3.4 In April 2024, Committee of the Whole and Council considered Report #[2024-COW-14](#) which recommended the Region's response to the Ontario Regulatory Registry posting related to the "Proposal to create regulation to support implementation of the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023".
- 3.5 In April 2024, Committee of the Whole and Council considered Report #[2024-COW-13](#) which recommended the sole source procurement for the Economic Study to undertake the analysis necessary to prepare the Region for the future prescribed Bill 131 Background Study.

4. Report

- 4.1 Following Council's endorsement of Report #[2025-COW-20](#) in May 2025 anticipating the release of the regulation to the Act, Regional staff have been working closely with its consultant team, including NBLC, Watson & Associates, and Bousfields, as well as staff from Oshawa, Clarington, the Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI), Ministry of Transportation (MTO), and Metrolinx, to prepare early materials, collect area municipal feedback, and conduct analysis related to the background study.
- 4.2 Early engagement with Oshawa and Clarington staff included a series of five themed discussions over the Fall on the various components of the background study and by-law, with opportunities for gathering detailed input and area municipal expertise for inputs into the various analyses being conducted by the consultant team in preparation of the background study.
- 4.3 On September 2, 2025, the Province released [O.Reg. 207/25](#), under the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023, outlining the procedure and processes a municipality is required to follow in order to implement a Transit Station Charge to advance new GO Stations. This includes the preparation of a background study and by-law that identifies the proposed charge and collection area, and undertaking a public consultation process prior to obtaining Council endorsement and Ministerial approval.
- 4.4 On September 8, 2025, following the release of O.Reg. 207/25, the Region submitted a 'Letter of Intent' package to the Minister of Infrastructure, formally expressing the Region's intent to explore a Transit Station Charge in Durham Region to contribute towards the cost of four new stations along the GO Lakeshore East Extension to Bowmanville. The letter was endorsed by staff from both Oshawa and Clarington.
- 4.5 A response to the 'Letter of Intent' package was received from the Minister of Infrastructure, dated December 1st, 2025 (Attachment 1), providing formal approval to the Region to prepare a Transit Station Charge Background Study and commence the process to implement a Transit Station Charge in Durham.
- 4.6 Regional staff will continue to work with the area municipalities, the Province, and Metrolinx to prepare the draft Background Study and draft by-law, and launch a public consultation process, anticipated in the first quarter of 2026.
- 4.7 The public consultation will be facilitated by Bousfields, and will include outreach, information-sharing, and meetings with various parties including: landowners surrounding the new GO Station sites, the business community, local community organizations, Indigenous rights holders, Regional and local councils, as well as the general public. The feedback from the public consultation will be incorporated into a final draft Background Study and by-law, which Regional staff intend to present to Regional Council ahead of the 2026 municipal elections.

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Strategic Direction(s) and Pathway(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

a. Connected and Vibrant Communities

- C1. Align Regional infrastructure and asset management with projected growth, climate impacts, and community needs.
- C2. Enable a full range of housing options, including housing that is affordable and close to transit.
- C3. Improve public transit system connectivity, reliability, and competitiveness.
- C4. Improve road safety, including the expansion and connection of active transportation networks to enhance the range of safe mobility options.
- C6. Continue to revitalize and transform downtowns into hubs of economic, social, and cultural connection.
- C7. Create accessible, lively, and culturally welcoming public spaces, including opportunities to access nature.

b. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action

- E2. Collaborate with partners on the low-carbon transition to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions across Durham Region.

c. Strong Relationships

- S1. Enhance inclusive opportunities for community engagement and meaningful collaboration.
- S2. Build and strengthen respectful relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities.
- S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.
- S4. Advocate to the federal and provincial government and agencies to advance regional priorities.
- S5. Ensure accountable and transparent decision-making to serve community needs, while responsibly managing available resources.

5.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- a. People: Making the Region of Durham a great place to work, attracting, and retaining talent.

- b. Processes: Continuously improving processes to ensure we are responsive to community needs.

6. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 6.1 The release of the regulation is significant milestone, reflecting considerable interdepartmental and area municipal staff time and expertise to keep the GO Lakeshore East Extension to Bowmanville moving on the right track.
- 6.2 Regional staff will continue to collaborate with area municipalities, MOI, MTO, Metrolinx, and other stakeholders in the development of the Background Study, by-law, and the public consultation process.
- 6.3 Regional staff intend to present a final draft of the Transit Station Charge Background Study and by-law to Regional Council for recommendation ahead of the 2026 municipal elections.

7. Attachments

Attachment #1: Letter, dated December 1, 2025, from the Minister of Infrastructure

Attachment #2: Resolution adopted at the Regional Municipality of Durham Council meeting held on March 26, 2025, requesting the Province of Ontario to Expedite Release of the Regulations for the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Austin
Commissioner of Community Growth and
Economic Development

Nicole Pincombe, CPA, CMA
Commissioner of Finance and Treasurer

Ministry of Infrastructure

Office of the Minister

5th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2E1
Telephone: 416-327-4412

Ministère de l'Infrastructure

Bureau du ministre

777, rue Bay, 5^e étage
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 2E1
Téléphone: 416-327-4412



December 1, 2025

Elaine Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer
The Regional Municipality of Durham
Elaine.Baxter-Trahair@durham.ca

Dear Elaine Baxter-Trahair,

Thank you for your September 8th, 2025 letter expressing Durham Region's interest in implementing the Transit Station Charge (TSC) to support the delivery of the four proposed GO stations along the Bowmanville Extension. The Ministry of Infrastructure has worked with ministry partners to gather information and provide a recommendation on proceeding with a background study. I am pleased to inform you that, based on this information, the region may proceed with a background study to implement a TSC.

Please continue to work with ministry staff to discuss the next steps of the process, including the region's background study requirements, as well as requirements for public consultations. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for the great collaboration in the ongoing working group between the region and the ministry. Your feedback continues to positively inform how we implement the TSC.

In addition, I am pleased to let you know that the Government of Ontario is working towards providing a financial loan option for municipalities seeking to implement a TSC. My ministry is working to ensure that application intakes for a new GO Stations Lending Stream will be available (through Infrastructure Ontario) in Spring 2026. The ministry would be pleased to facilitate a meeting with the region to provide more information about this new financing tool, once available.

Thank you again for your ongoing collaboration and interest in the TSC to expedite the delivery of transit projects. Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Bronwyn Cuthbertson, Director, Transit Oriented Communities Policy and Delivery Branch at bronwyn.cuthbertson@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Todd McCarthy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The Honourable Todd McCarthy
Acting Minister of Infrastructure

cc. MPP Lorne Coe, Whitby
MPP Peter Bethlenfalvy, Pickering- Uxbridge



SENT VIA EMAIL

March 26, 2025

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

**The Regional
Municipality of
Durham**

Corporate Services
Department –
Legislative Services
Division

605 Rossland Rd. E.
Level 1
PO Box 623
Whitby, ON L1N 6A3
Canada

905-668-7711
1-800-372-1102

durham.ca

**Alexander Harras
M.P.A.
Director of
Legislative Services
& Regional Clerk**

RE: Request to the Province of Ontario to release the regulations to enable the Region of Durham to proceed with a background study on Transit Station Charge(s) to support the funding and delivery of four new GO stations and Transit-Oriented Communities along the GO Lakeshore East Extension to Bowmanville, Our File: D21

Council of the Region of Durham, at its meeting held on March 26, 2025, passed the following resolution:

“WHEREAS residents, workers, and businesses in the Region of Durham rely on regional transportation to connect with one another, commute to and from work, and reach new customers;

AND WHEREAS current economic uncertainty reinforces the need to invest in our communities, invest in public infrastructure, build more homes, and strengthen the connections between residents, workers and businesses in the region;

AND WHEREAS the Region of Durham identifies the GO Lakeshore East Extension as a priority project that can drive economic development, transform and connect our communities and help achieve a more sustainable future;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario committed to build and fund the GO Lakeshore East Extension in the 2022 provincial budget;

AND WHEREAS the Region of Durham and the Province of Ontario have worked collaboratively together on an innovative approach to transit-oriented community development;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario introduced and passed the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023, to enable more GO stations, spur more housing and mixed-use communities around transit, and help make it more convenient to travel across the Greater Toronto Area and surrounding regions;

AND WHEREAS the Region of Durham estimates that the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023 will enable up to 16,000 new homes across four new transit-oriented communities in the next 30 years, providing much needed housing options in the Region of Durham;

AND WHEREAS the Region of Durham wishes to expeditiously pass a transit station charge by-law under the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023 to support the funding of the four new GO stations along the GO Lakeshore East Extension;

AND WHEREAS there are current development applications in the City of Oshawa and Municipality of Clarington that are within the area of future GO stations where a transit station charge would apply.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: THAT the Council of the Regional Municipality of Durham hereby requests that the Province of Ontario expedite the release of regulations under the GO Transit Station Funding Act, 2023 to enable the Region of Durham to proceed with a background study and pass a Transit Station Charge By-law to support the funding of four new GO stations and Transit-Oriented Communities along the GO Lakeshore East Extension to Bowmanville.

AND THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Transportation, the Minister of Infrastructure, all local Durham MPPs, and all Durham local area municipalities.”

Alexander Harras

Alexander Harras,
Director of Legislative Services & Regional Clerk

AH/sr

- c. Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation
- Hon. Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure
- Hon. P. Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance, MPP, Pickering/Ajax
- R. Cerjanec, MPP, Ajax
- L. Coe, MPP, Whitby
- Hon. T. McCarthy, Minister of Environment, Conservation and
Parks, MPP, Durham
- J. French, MPP, Oshawa
- L. Scott, MPP, Haliburton/Kawartha Lakes/Brock
- Hon. D. Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills
Development , MPP, Northumberland/Peterborough South
- Town of Ajax
- Township of Brock
- Municipality of Clarington
- City of Oshawa
- City of Pickering
- Township of Scugog
- Township of Uxbridge
- Town of Whitby