



Interoffice Memorandum

Date: January 23, 2026

To: Chair Henry & Members of Regional Council

From: Sandra Austin, Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development

Subject: ALTO High-Speed Rail through Durham Region

This memorandum provides information on ongoing virtual and upcoming in-person consultation opportunities related to the [ALTO high-speed rail project](#).

Background:

ALTO's aim is to build Canada's first high-speed rail network that will run at speeds of 300 km/hr or more to connect major cities in the Toronto–Québec City corridor. Their mandate is to deliver a modern, efficient rail system that improves regional mobility, supports economic growth, and significantly reduces travel times between major urban centres.

The network is to consist of nearly 1,000 kilometres of dedicated railway tracks, with seven station stops identified in Toronto, Peterborough, Ottawa, Montréal, Laval, Trois-Rivières and Québec City. The proposed alignments travel through Durham Region. The Ontario corridor options are provided in Attachment #1. There was originally no station stop identified in Durham Region. ALTO's representatives shared in early January that any additional station stops would have to be added to the network in the future.

We support the addition of a station or stop within Durham Region. Regional Chair John Henry sent a letter to ALTO in September 2025 to express support for the City of Pickering's request to include a station stop in Pickering (see Attachment #2).

The Regional Municipality of
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Sandra Austin,
Commissioner of Community
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Development

A station in Pickering would significantly improve transit access, along with long-distance business and recreational travel, for residents and businesses in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

Durham staff will continue working closely with the City of Pickering, Indigenous community representatives, ALTO and their construction consortium throughout the planning, design and implementation process to advocate for a station location in Durham Region.

Consultation Opportunities:

ALTO is currently conducting public consultation to gather feedback on the proposed project. There are currently three ways to provide input:

- In-person open houses
- Virtual information sessions
- Online consultation platform

In-person Open Houses

Open Houses are being hosted across Ontario and Quebec over the next couple of months. An Open House is being hosted in Pickering. This presents an opportunity to demonstrate support for a future station within Durham.

Event Details:

- Date: **Thursday, February 12, 2026**
- Location: Chestnut Hill Developments Recreation Complex (O'Brien Rooms)
- Two Time Slots Available: 11:00 am – 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Additional information is provided here: [Open Houses](#).

Virtual Information Sessions

Virtual information sessions are available in several municipalities and include:

- Live Q&A period
- Quebec and American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation
- Sessions provided in French and English

Information and scheduling of the virtual information sessions are provided [here](#), with sessions starting as early as January 31, and running at least bi-weekly until March 17, 2026.

Online Consultation Platform

The [online consultation platform](#) is available until March 29, 2026. The project team would like to hear from the community on their views on the corridor proposal, and considerations on the various aspects of the project. You are encouraged to:

- Complete the survey
- Provide feedback on the interactive map
- Submit a brief

Next Steps:

Council members are encouraged to participate and share public consultation details to maximize community participation.

Previous Reports and Decisions:

Commissioner's Report [#2020-P-21](#), Project Update: VIA Rail Canada's proposal for High Frequency Rail Service between Quebec City and Toronto

Respectfully,

Original signed by

Sandra Austin
Commissioner of Community Growth and
Economic Development

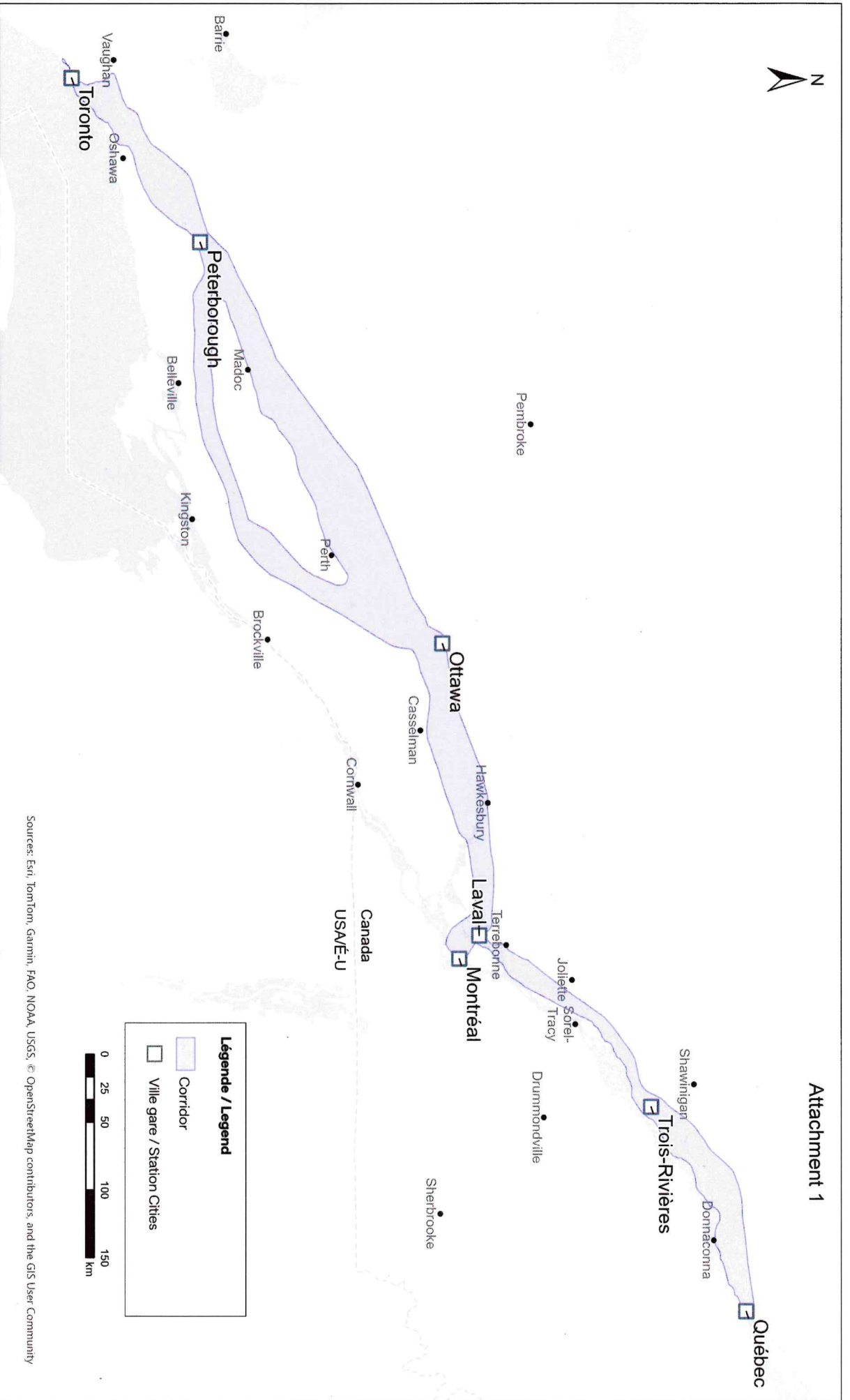
Cc Elaine Baxter-Trahair, CAO
Regional Department Heads
Alison Burgess, Executive Director – Communications and Engagement

Attachment #1 Map – ALTO Public Consultation Toronto-Quebec City High-Speed Rail Network

Attachment #2 Letter from Region of Durham, September 18, 2025



Attachment 1





Sent by Email

September 18, 2025

Martin Imbleau
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John Henry
Regional Chair and
CEO

Re: ALTO/VIA High Speed Rail proposed Station Stop in Pickering

Dear Mr. Imbleau:

I am writing to express support for the City of Pickering's request to include a station stop along the proposed High Speed Rail (HSR) line. This initiative represents a transformative opportunity to enhance inter-regional connectivity, support sustainable growth, and strengthen economic development across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

The proposed HSR station in Pickering would significantly improve transit access, along with long-distance business and recreational travel, for residents and businesses in the northeastern GTHA. By reducing travel times from northwest Pickering to Union Station by nearly 70 per cent, this station would offer a fast, efficient, and environmentally responsible alternative to car travel. It would also integrate seamlessly with high-order regional transit routes, including the Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit and the Province's proposed east-west rapid transit corridor along or near Highway 407.

Pickering is poised for substantial growth, with the Seaton Community alone expected to welcome 70,000 new residents and 35,000 new jobs. Similarly, areas near the proposed HSR station in Pickering—including south Markham, north Brooklin, and northeast Pickering—are expected to see significant residential growth. An HSR station would help accommodate this growth by supporting transit-oriented development and reducing pressure on existing transportation infrastructure. This mirrors the success of suburban stations like Dorval and Laval in the Greater Montreal area, which have effectively served growing communities outside the city centre.

If you require this information in an accessible format, please contact Communications and Engagement at CorporateCommunications@durham.ca or 311, extension 3743.

We are excited about the potential of this project to connect our cities and towns more effectively, reduce environmental impacts, and support vibrant, complete communities. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss a future partnership to advance sustainable and innovative transportation solutions.

Yours truly,



John Henry
Regional Chair and CEO

- c. Elaine Baxter-Trahair, CAO
Sandra Austin, Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic
Development
Marisa Carpino, CAO, City of Pickering
Fiaz Jadoon, Director, Economic Development and Strategic Projects, City of
Pickering