

## Re: ONxpress Contract Cancellation and the Need for Equitable Future Service Improvements Across the GO Network

To CEO Michael Lindsay,

On behalf of More Transit Southern Ontario (MTSO), a grassroots organization of riders advocating for more connected, frequent, and reliable transit throughout Southern Ontario, we are writing to express our concerns and offer constructive input regarding the recent decision to cancel the 25-year operations and maintenance contract with ONxpress Transportation Partners under the GO Expansion program<sup>1</sup>. In the past month, this unforeseen development has generated uncertainty among transit riders across the region, particularly impacting those relying on services beyond the Lakeshore East and West lines.

Prior to news of the contract's cancellation becoming public, there had been no public indication that this decision would be made to cancel the deal with ONxpress and no public statements, reports, or meetings regarding this topic were provided by Metrolinx. Questions remain unanswered regarding how this cancellation will affect service levels, frequencies, and overall project timelines.

While we understand the importance of prioritizing services on the heavily used Lakeshore corridors, we strongly urge Metrolinx and its Board to reaffirm a clear and public commitment to equitable service expansion across all GO Transit lines. Riders in rapidly growing communities along the Kitchener, Milton, Barrie, Richmond Hill, and Stouffville corridors — many of whom already face infrequent or peak-only train service — cannot be left behind.

According to a high-level schedule published by Metrolinx in April 2025, internal projections indicate electrification completion dates as late as September 2035 for Lakeshore West, December 2036 for Lakeshore East, and January 2038 for the Union Station Rail Corridor. Meanwhile, other critical line upgrades have been deprioritized or removed from the initial phase of the project<sup>2</sup>. This suggests that riders will be left waiting for more than a decade for the start of electrified service when millions of dollars and numerous years have already been invested into planning and designing the required infrastructure. This outcome runs counter to the goals of regional connectivity, economic growth, and climate resilience.

However, the cancellation of the ONxpress contract presents an opportunity to realign GO Expansion with a rider-first vision. We urge Metrolinx to commit to the following actions:

- Transparent communication of revised plans, service goals, and timelines for each corridor that GO Expansion plans to serve;
- Targeted investments to enhance off-peak and weekend frequencies on under-served lines like the Stouffville, Barrie and Milton lines;
- Immediate and interim service improvements where feasible, particularly on lines like Kitchener and Stouffville, which have seen major capital investments in recent years;
- Ongoing & meaningful engagement with transit users, municipalities, and advocates, including extensive participation in public forums, town halls, and Metrolinx-related events.

We hope that Metrolinx takes these suggestions into consideration moving forward with the GO Expansion program in pursuit of shaping a world-class transit network suitable for the growing region.

Regards,

**Jonathan Lee How Cheong**

Co-Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2025/05/25/metrolinx-go-transit-onxpress-contract-calls-for-information-from-ontario-opposition-parties/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thetrillium.ca/news/the-trillium-investigations/how-metrolinx-plan-to-deliver-european-style-train-service-went-off-the-rails-10786705>