



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To:	Committee of the Whole
From:	M. Paul Cripps, P.Eng., Commissioner, Engineering Services
Date:	October 7, 2019
Report No:	ENG-033-19
Subject:	Metrolinx - GO Transit Updates and Initiatives
Recommendation:	THAT ENG-033-19 be received.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This information report summarizes two (2) key Metrolinx operational initiatives with Milton significance, including implemented GO Transit service updates and future participation in the Metrolinx Transit Procurement Initiative (TPI).

REPORT

Background

Other the past several years, Metrolinx has implemented a number of programs to deliver strategic initiatives endorsed in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Staff continue to be directly involved on various Metrolinx-coordinated technical, planning and steering committees. This report provides an update on two (2) operational initiatives:

- 2019 GO Transit Service Updates
- Participation in the Metrolinx Transit Procurement Initiative (TPI)

Discussion

The importance of GO Transit service to Milton Transit is significant. According to the latest 2017 GO Rail Passenger Survey, Milton Transit is bringing approximately 13% of GO Transit passengers to the Milton GO Station. The survey suggests that about 310 customers are now travelling from home to the GO Station on Milton Transit per weekday. This statistic is up from 10% (or 250 customers per day) in 2015, indicating a 25% increase in two (2) years. The increase is consistent with ridership and revenue trends reported on recent Milton Transit Key Performance Indicator (KPI) quarterly reports.

As indicated in the 2019-2023 Milton Transit Service Review and Master Plan Update ([ENG-021-19](#)), Milton Transit is responsive to the needs of GO Transit customers. Current



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service frequencies on Milton Transit routes combined with irregular GO Train and Bus arrival and departure times, limit transferability between both systems. However, staff have been able to isolate, communicate and implement key connections to maintain service integration opportunities.

2019 GO Transit Service Updates

Staff received notification from Metrolinx of recently implemented GO Transit service updates on May 1, 2019 (proposed GO Bus service discontinuations) and May 27, 2019 (proposed GO Train schedule changes on the Milton Line). Both changes were implemented effective July 2, 2019 and are publically available on the GO Transit website (www.go-transit.com). Metrolinx has also provided alternative travel options for affected customers impacted by the proposed discontinued GO Bus services.

GO Bus Service Discontinuation

GO Transit scheduling changes in 2019 included two (2) discontinued GO Bus routes that operated long-haul services in Milton, including Route 20 (Milton/Oakville) and Route 24 (Cambridge/Milton). Both routes provided interregional connections to neighbouring jurisdictions. However, according to Metrolinx, both routes experienced poor ridership performance (low demand), which precipitated the removal of service. To date, staff have not received any additional commentary from Metrolinx on service removal justification and/or implications.

While the removal of GO Bus services does not directly affect Milton Transit service, key Halton passenger links have been eliminated. Specifically, customers that have used the Route 20 GO Bus for connections to/from Oakville (mainly Sheridan College) are now required to connect through Mississauga (Erin Mills Transitway Station) via the Hwy 401/RR25 carpool area. While Milton Transit does provide limited service to the carpool area, the communicated alternative travel plan has added significant distance and travel time for customers starting/ending trips in Oakville. Additionally, the GO Transit Co-Fare Integration subsidy does not apply for Milton Transit and GO Transit connections outside of the Milton GO Station. Therefore, passengers who make connections to/from Milton Transit service to/from GO Transit service at the Hwy 401/RR25 carpool area are required to pay a full fare.

As a response to the discontinuation of GO Bus service routes in Milton, staff continue to receive cross-boundary service requests, particularly to destinations in Oakville. It is important to note that cross-boundary service to Oakville has been identified as a long-term initiative in the 2019-2023 Milton Transit Service Review and Master Plan Update ([ENG-021-19](#)) as part of a larger regional priority network. Staff will continue to monitor the



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pulse of service requests and review implications in conjunction with the annual service plan process.

GO Train Schedule Adjustments

To accommodate some service delays experienced on the Milton Line due to construction at Cooksville and Kipling stations, Metrolinx implemented scheduling adjustments to various GO Train trips, effective July 2, 2019. GO Train departure and arrival times at the Milton GO Station were shifted between 1-3 minutes for a number of trips, to reflect actual GO Train operating times to/from Union Station (Table 1).

Table 1. Milton GO Train Departures and Arrivals at Milton GO Station

AM Departures from Milton GO				PM Arrivals at Milton GO			
Train No	Before July 2	Effective July 2	Variance	Train No	Before July 2	Effective July 2	Variance
148	5:59	5:59	No change	149	4:39	4:40	1 min
150	6:23	6:23	No change	151	5:09	5:12	3 min
152	6:44	6:42	2 min	153	5:42	5:44	2 min
154	6:59	6:57	2 min	155	5:55	5:56	1 min
156	7:12	7:10	2 min	157	6:10	6:12	2 min
158	7:24	7:22	2 min	159	6:25	6:27	2 min
160	7:35	7:33	2 min	161	6:40	6:42	2 min
162	7:45	7:43	2 min	163	6:54	6:56	2 min
164	7:57	7:55	2 min	165	7:24	7:26	2 min
166	8:26	8:27	1 min	167	8:09	8:10	1 min

GO Train schedule changes caused connection time issues with Milton Transit routes, particularly in the afternoon/evening peak period where bus layover time was shortened. Therefore, staff were required to implement schedule changes on all affected Milton Transit routes to maintain existing GO Train-bus connections for passengers.

While there were no direct budgetary impacts associated with Milton Transit changes (all adjustments were within allocated service hours), the limited notice provided by Metrolinx caused abrupt changes to staff work plan priorities. There was also limited ability for staff to administer comprehensive print and online communications. Staff have followed up with Metrolinx on providing sufficient lead times for future anticipated GO Transit service changes. Metrolinx have since communicated the intent of re-designing their service planning process to provide three (3) months' notice for schedule adjustments and 12-18 months' notice for major service changes. If implemented, this arrangement would provide ample lead-time for staff to prepare and address future Milton Transit service implications.



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Participation in Metrolinx Transit Procurement Initiative (TPI)

Established in 2006¹, Metrolinx continues to coordinate multiple joint procurement initiatives for transit goods and services on behalf of participating municipalities. The purpose of Metrolinx TPI is to achieve quality products/services, favourable pricing and timely delivery/implementation. TPI coordinates the development of performance-based specifications for bulk purchasing, while permitting customized specifications for unique municipal needs. Metrolinx solicits specific program interest from municipalities, and then prioritizes/selects programs based on anticipated interest, program feasibility, market conditions and budget. Municipalities confirm participation by executing a Governance Agreement (GA), which sets out the relationship between Metrolinx and potential purchasers in the joint procurement process, and describes the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Since 2009, Milton has participated in eleven (11) Metrolinx TPIs, including the procurement of:

- 12 metre, diesel-powered low floor buses
- 8 metre, diesel-powered low floor buses
- 7 metre, gas-powered, mini-buses
- Transit parts/management; Transit Inventory Management System (TIMS)²
- Automated Vehicle Location/Intelligent Transportation Systems (AVL/ITS)

While Milton's participation is voluntary, the Metrolinx TPI has been advantageous for the following reasons:

- Increased pricing advantage, leveraging purchases with larger participating municipalities; specification standardization
- Increased knowledge-sharing with other municipalities
- Improved product delivery predictability
- Improved support and aftermarket response times
- Added assurance that equipment complies with various legislative requirements
- Increased municipal transparency via a Fairness Commissioner (contracted by Metrolinx) to ensure a fair and transparent RFP process
- Savings from contract administrative resources that would be required for a standalone municipal RFP process

Staff continue to participate on various TPI evaluation committees and the Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC).

¹ Ministry of Transportation (MTO) initiated the program in 2006, and then transferred to Metrolinx in 2008.

² Discontinued in 2013. Metrolinx did not extend TIMS contract.



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Updated 2019-2024 Governance Agreement (GA)

The purpose of a GA is to establish the basic framework for the joint procurement process (i.e. RFP issuance, evaluation, award of contract, etc.). Typical GA terms include:

- Steering Committee establishment, comprising of municipal representatives authorized to make procurement decisions
- Contract evaluation and award
- Supplier exclusivity for goods/services to be procured over the contract term
- “Opt-Out” clause within five (5) days after Steering Committee recommendation
- Inclusion terms for new participants during the contract term; and
- Provisions for transparent and competitive procurement process, compliant with latest Provincial policies

The updated GA term for 2019-2024 incorporates a number of similar terms and conditions to previously Town-executed GAs. However, there are significant changes to the updated GA that will need further staff and legal review/assessment to determine the ultimate impact on future participation. These changes include:

- Removal of Metrolinx-funded third-party bus inspection services³
- Inclusion of a participant administration fee (to be identified and agreed to at the Terms of Reference (TOR) stage
- Tighter defined processes and procedure rules
- Expanded definition of purchasers (e.g. non-profit organizations, Divisions of Metrolinx, such as GO Transit and PRESTO)

In light of these changes, staff will continue to work with Metrolinx to identify potential local impacts. A recommendation for future participation in the Metrolinx TPI will be addressed in a future report.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts with this report.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Paul Cripps, P. Eng.

³ Retroactively effective August 31, 2019.

