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Monday 8 April 2013

**Journal
des débats
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Lundi 8 avril 2013

**Standing Committee on
General Government**

Traffic congestion

**Comité permanent des
affaires gouvernementales**

Congestion routière

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GENERAL GOVERNMENTCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES

Monday 8 April 2013

Lundi 8 avril 2013

The committee met at 1401 in room committee room 1.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Good afternoon—

Mr. Mike Colle: Point of order.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Let me just call the meeting to order first.

Mr. Mike Colle: Oh, I thought you did.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We'll call the meeting of the Standing Committee on General Government to order on Monday, April 8, at 2 p.m.

Mr. Colle?

Mr. Mike Colle: Mr. Chairman, I have a motion that I've prepared in writing—I'll pass it out to members of the committee for you to look at during the committee proceedings—that I'd like to move at the end of the meeting.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Okay, so we'll just circulate it and deal with it at the end.

Ms. Campbell?

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I too have a motion that I will be moving at the end of today's hearings, and I will hand it out right now as well.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): All right: deputants. At 2 o'clock, we have the Ministry of Transportation, Carol Layton, the deputy minister. Maybe you could introduce your guest. The agreement of the committee is 10 minutes for your presentation, and then we'll resort to questions from all sides for 15 minutes.

Ms. Carol Layton: Thank you, Chair. With me I have today John Lieou, who is the assistant deputy minister for our policy and planning division in the Ministry of Transportation, and I have some colleagues in the back as well.

I can begin now?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Yes, go ahead.

Ms. Carol Layton: Certainly, I'd like to thank you for inviting me back before the committee. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the very important work (a) that you're investigating and (b) that we're dealing with on the topic of congestion.

I know that some of you were on the committee when I was here last June, so it's good to be back again. Today I would like to briefly review the key points that I made when I appeared before the committee last June, then

provide an update on initiatives and investments related to congestion that we've been focused on in recent months, also provide an update on work being undertaken to address the transportation needs in northern Ontario and, finally, touch on the important role of our federal partners that they should also play in addressing sustainable infrastructure sources for transportation and transit infrastructure.

When I appeared before the committee last June, I described some of the key challenges we face in tackling congestion, including significant economic and population growth pressures on our transportation systems. We discussed major investments in municipal transit, including significant provincial funding commitments for light rail transit in Ottawa and also rapid transit investments in Waterloo region. I described investments in transit across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, including bus rapid transit projects, the extension of the Spadina subway line to York region, and the Union Pearson Express that's going to be connecting Pearson International Airport with Union Station.

In terms of highway infrastructure, we reviewed major projects, including the 407 east extension, and continued widening along key corridors, including the expansion and rehabilitation that we're doing of Highway 401 in different areas, and the 417. We talked about the ongoing construction of the Windsor-Essex Parkway that has been renamed the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway. On the planning front, we provided an update on longer-term corridor studies that would allow us to best facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods through the Niagara, Hamilton and Halton areas.

On page 4: We all have to work from blueprints, and certainly Places to Grow back in 2006 set the parameters for sustainable land use and required that investments be aligned to deliver transit-oriented intensification. Population and employment growth in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area and other urban areas require significant transit and transportation investments. However, looking back over a few decades, these investments have not always been provided consistently, and therefore we have to continue to address this need. We know that many communities lack the capacity to provide sustained transit and transportation services and investments, and may not be well positioned to address even the demographic challenges that themselves are going to require being addressed in transit, such as the aging of our population as they are less able to drive.

The greater Toronto and Hamilton area is facing mobility challenges—congestion, essentially. Limited transportation options result in longer commute times, which impact the economy overall, business efficiency and the quality of life of our travelling public.

On page 5—in terms of funding programs to provide basic support, government actions to date: More than \$460 million in transit vehicle funding provided between 2003 and 2009 reduced the average age of buses from 11.4 years to 5.5 years; Ontario's gas tax program provides two cents per litre in funding for municipal transit across the province—more than \$2.2 billion since 2004. In 2011-12 alone, that meant \$317 million provided to 96 transit systems in 127 communities across the province. These communities represent about 88% of Ontario's population.

In terms of strategic investment as well, there have certainly been great investments in the city of Toronto and the TTC—about \$4 billion invested since 2003. The province has committed \$600 million to Ottawa's light rail transit project and \$300 million to the Waterloo rapid transit project—and of course, in 2006, the creation of Metrolinx to plan and implement a regional transportation plan for the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

I know that later on this afternoon you're going to have Bruce McCuaig here, so I won't spend too much time on the Big Move, other than to indicate that the Big Move is the regional transportation plan provided in 2008 through Metrolinx. Implementation of the Big Move is intended to support economic competitiveness and improve the quality of life by providing more transportation options, reducing commute times, providing sustainable growth, and reducing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. Several Big Move projects are under way, including the four Toronto LRT projects, the York region Viva, the Union Pearson Express, the Toronto York-Spadina subway extension and the Presto fare card to improve regional integration for the region itself.

Metrolinx has identified an updated next wave of priority projects from its Big Move as well as a refined list of investment tools which could be used to support the implementation of these projects—all of that for further consideration. Metrolinx will provide its final investment strategy to the province and the GTA heads of council by June 1 of this year. Upon receipt of the investment strategy, the province will consider Metrolinx's recommendations and move forward as appropriate, with the outcomes of the province's actions guided by the right investments, the right tools and certainly the right supporting policies.

There are other initiatives, though, that I'd also like to speak about in terms of addressing congestion; for example, cycling. The ministry is moving forward with a cycling strategy, released a draft cycling strategy, and has been conducting consultations on that, reviewing the many comments that have been received from the public and from stakeholder groups as well as from municipalities.

I mentioned earlier that the ministry is also continuing to rehab and widen Highway 401, one of the busiest highways in North America. This is across the province, literally from Quebec to the Detroit border—something like \$2 billion to make sure that that very important network and very important connection point is rehabilitated and, also in the case of interchanges and some bridges, to widen them where we can.

We're also working to develop a multimodal goods movement framework that will provide a long-term vision for creating a well-organized transportation system able to adapt to changing market patterns. We've received a great deal of input from the public, municipalities and business stakeholders, and are currently working to finalize the framework.

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We know that reducing collisions on our roads means fewer delays. Our most recent statistics show that Ontario continues to have one of the lowest road fatality rates on the continent. In fact, the province has ranked first or second in North America for more than 10 years now and has made significant progress in saving lives and reducing injuries. This is a fact not lost on Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Arlene King, who in her 2010 annual report referred to Ontario's road safety record as one of the great health public policy successes in the province.

We also work to maximize the efficiency of existing infrastructure; that's on page 8. To meet the transportation challenges we face today and in the coming years, the ministry must think and act in innovative ways to get the most out of our infrastructure. Slide 8 speaks to some of the innovative approaches that we've been taking.

Of course, first and foremost is the effective management of the asset that we already have to make sure that we're optimizing that asset and make sure that it's always in good condition.

We're using state-of-the-art rapid bridge replacement technology to mitigate congestion. Last fall, we replaced the Highway 401 off-road bridge near Yorkdale Shopping Centre in just 53 hours; the traditional method would have taken up to a year. MTO has also used this technology in Ottawa and in Hamilton, and we have two more projects planned in Ottawa later this summer.

In terms of using technology to get useful travel information to motorists, our Compass system and our 511 Traveller's Road Information Portal provide easy access to traffic conditions that help all of us make decisions about our traffic, including how to avoid congested routes.

The government has invested in HOV lanes—high-occupancy-vehicle lanes—on 400-series highways to improve the efficiency of our highways. To date, Ontario has constructed 83 lane-kilometres of HOV lanes on the provincial highway network in the GTA and Ottawa. MTO also provides 82 carpool parking lots near dozens of highway interchanges throughout Ontario, 17 of which are served by public transit—and a good number of those, of course, in the GTA.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have one minute.

Ms. Carol Layton: Thank you very much.

Turning quickly to northern Ontario, I'd like to just reference there that we certainly have invested about \$524 million to invest and repair northern highways. I could list a number of them, but I'll maybe do that later. We're also working with MTO and with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and across government, quite frankly, with the Ministry of Infrastructure to implement a growth plan for northern Ontario. The MTO role in that is the development of a northern Ontario multimodal transportation strategy. We're currently working on a number of studies to determine the unique needs of northern Ontario, and we can speak to that in any of the Q&As.

Finally, the federal government certainly must play its part. In Ontario's speech from the throne, the government said it would reach out to provincial and territorial colleagues to advocate for a national strategy on infrastructure and transit. The federal government certainly has provided funding in many different projects around the province, although no sustainable ongoing source of federal funding that's unique to transit.

In meetings that I've had with my federal, provincial and territorial colleagues, I certainly have appreciated the distinct needs of each jurisdiction—the regions that they have, the territories that we're dealing with—and I certainly look forward to supporting the Minister of Transportation on this initiative. And all of that to say that I'd like to thank the committee for the opportunity to make some brief remarks, and I welcome any questions.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. First to question will be the PCs, Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you very much, Deputy. I really appreciate your input today. Quite honestly, it's a shame that we don't have more time for you because you're obviously the lead in this whole discussion about gridlock and all the options and choices in policy that need to be made from transit, looking at Metrolinx and further commitments to capital—a huge, huge challenge. In fact, it's enormous. In fact, if you look at the media, even today, crowding out everything is the new tools discussion; I'm sure you are paying attention to that, and we'll get a chance to talk to Metrolinx about that.

But to just make a couple of things on a local level, I represent the riding of Durham and have for about 18 years. For part of that I was a regional councillor and a councillor. And I worked for General Motors. So transit is kind of—I even took courses in transportation logistics and stuff like that. But anyway, I'm concerned about the number of bad decisions that have been made on the east decision of connecting Durham to the GTA. It's shameful. I don't blame you personally—these are mostly political. A good example more recently is the 407—

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: I have time here. Thank you.

The 407 going east—what a shameful decision to cancel that. No, I'm not even trying to be political. Then

they made the decision to go to Simcoe Street. Simcoe Street does not go eastbound on the 401; it doesn't go eastbound. You can't get there from there. The next thing is, they move it to Harmony Road. That's a residential—I know it's a regional, arterial road, but I phoned all the people who I know there and told them to move or sell immediately. It's tragic what they've done. It's an urban street.

Now, that's bad. I told them, and I'm going to give you—on the paper, you could write this down perhaps: Holt Road would be where you should take it to. That's going to be where the refurbishment of the Darlington nuclear plant—it's a transmission corridor. I told the people at those PICs, public information centres, that's where it should be. I know; I live there. I know all about it. It should be on Holt Road. Save yourself a lot of grief and take it off. But how they're treating the farmers on the route there, on the expropriation of the land, is tragic. But anyway, we'll stop there.

Metrolinx: They've promised the GO train to Bowmanville for the last 25 years. I take GO. I have a Presto card; I use it every day. There's no parking at the GO station in Oshawa, the terminus—at 7 o'clock, it's done. Then you get about a \$300 ticket.

Now, this all makes sense—through you, Chair—of my lack of what I said at the beginning; I don't blame you or your assistant deputy. But now I've given them another suggestion. You should write this down: Do not bother taking the GO train—and I've talked to Metrolinx, to Bruce, recently on this, and Roger Anderson and all the mayors—leave the GO train on the south side of the 401. Take it straight to Port Hope, because right now, my option to GO is to take the VIA. I can be from Oshawa to Union Station in 29 minutes for the theatre, for the ball game, for work—29 minutes. It's already running, I believe, from Kingston.

You want to solve the parking problem at the GO station? I did three surveys, all my own private surveys, because I talk to people. All the people at the parking are from Port Hope, Cobourg, Courtice, Bowmanville, the city of Kawartha Lakes and Peterborough. That's why it's full. It's the end of the line, so everybody who's coming from somewhere else—just take it to Courtice Road, seriously. There's vacant land there, right beside a sewage treatment plant. It's very well done, I should say. It's not some kind of eyesore.

There are just two practical ideas. We have basically been ignored. Now I understand that Metrolinx is purchasing the land to bring the GO train to the north side of the 401. We're being told that until they get the capital to build this bridge and buy the land—it's right by Durham College, right on the 401 there. They're assembling the land.

The Audi dealer called me, and they're taking his land, where he was going to expand, because he has an RV business.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 30 seconds left.

Mr. John O'Toole: Twenty seconds left. I am so disappointed—not in you or Bob Chiarelli. I understand

that. No one's paying attention to Durham. I put it on the table in a public forum because I'll be sending this out—

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: No, no. It's perhaps an ineffective member. Has somebody not been listening to me? I've been saying it for 20 years, but here's what happens: The bottom line is they have their minds made up, and that's what they're doing. The shoe doesn't fit.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Okay, gentlemen. I have to—

Mr. John O'Toole: Thanks for your presentation. I'll keep a copy of it.

Ms. Carol Layton: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The NDP? Mr. Marchese?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Chair. Welcome, Ms. Layton. I've got a couple of questions. We were waiting for a new cycling strategy for a long time, since 2010, and then we finally got a document released, and it was released for public feedback on January 29, 2013, which is good. I'm wondering, when do you think it will be completed?

Ms. Carol Layton: I missed the very first part of your question. So you were waiting—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: We were waiting for a cycling strategy for a long time—

Ms. Carol Layton: Oh, the cycling strategy. Okay. Sorry, I missed that part.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: That's okay.

Ms. Carol Layton: So on the cycling strategy, we did release the draft, as you know, and have had, even in the last few weeks—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: When will it be completed, do you think?

Ms. Carol Layton: I can't give you an exact date on its completion because, of course, Minister Murray himself talks about how keen he is as a cyclist, so he's bringing his perspective as well into the work that we're doing.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: That's good.

Ms. Carol Layton: But, of course, we have to respond to the coroner report very soon, and I think you'll see some of our strategy, in a sense, in that context, but certainly the concept of a provincial network—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But we don't know. We don't know when—

Ms. Carol Layton: But I don't have the exact date.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Very good.

Will there be funding attached for cycling infrastructure? Do you know?

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Ms. Carol Layton: In the draft cycling strategy, Minister Chiarelli, when he released it, did indicate that in the MIII, municipal infrastructure investment initiative, cycling was added as a valid initiative under that, and so, based on municipalities in terms of what they would like to submit as a priority, they can certainly submit for cycling initiatives in that context.

But the other point that I would make again—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No, no. I have so many questions.

Ms. Carol Layton: Okay.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The question was, do you think there will be money attached for infrastructure for cycling?

Ms. Carol Layton: The only money I can speak to right now is the money that's sitting right now in the MIII strategy. That's the only money that's right now attached to cycling.

The other area—I just want to make sure that you appreciate this—is, as we look at highway rehabilitation and as we look at highway expansions, including, for example, the 407 east extension, we also add cycling capabilities to those sorts of structures as well. As we roll out more highway expansion projects and rehab throughout the province and in the north, we also look at cycling in that context. So I can't give you an exact figure. We just make sure we have that lens always on cycling.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Okay. I'm glad to hear that. I just get so nervous because I have so many questions for you, and if the answers get too long or they digress, then I can't get—

Ms. Carol Layton: If you can talk faster, I can talk faster.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So the Public Vehicles Act is 80 years old. It creates unnecessary barriers, so people say, to seamless transit, van pooling, flexible and customer-oriented transit service: as an example, municipal buses that can't pick up passengers outside of the jurisdiction etc. Will the Public Vehicles Act be updated to focus on transit users and support seamless and convenient transit use?

Ms. Carol Layton: I think it's fair to say that we're looking at all of our legislation—the Highway Traffic Act, the Public Vehicles Act—all within the context of transit and transportation.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I understand you're looking at it. Looking at it means, "We'll be looking at it." It's like it could take 100 years; it could take 50. Do you have a sense of when we might look at it?

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes. It's a priority. Anything that's addressing and supporting congestion and transit is a priority, and so that's work that we have under way.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Okay. The Highway Traffic Act is outdated and a barrier to sustainable mobility. Changes are needed to encourage cycling safety, cycling infrastructure and complete streets. When will a comprehensive review of the Highway Traffic Act happen, to make it supportive of cyclists and pedestrians?

Ms. Carol Layton: The Highway Traffic Act is a large piece of legislation, and we are reviewing it—rather than a one-off comprehensive review, it is constantly under review, and it's under review in the same context of releasing what would be that final cycling strategy. That's work that is, again, under way by the road user safety division folks that we have, and that's work that's under way right now. I cannot give you a date as to exactly—you know, the nature of the changes. Again, as

we work with a relatively new minister, we're working our way through that.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Improving the proximity between where people work and where people live is key to reducing congestion, and I think we all agree to that.

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The government is reviewing the provincial policy statement.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 30 seconds.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: When will this review be completed, and how will it encourage smart developments where people live close to where they work?

Ms. Carol Layton: I'd have to defer to my colleague. The provincial policy statement is under the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. It's a different ministry, and I don't know exactly the cycle of that. I know there's a number of major pieces of work coming up for review. One is the growth plan itself. The other one is the provincial policy statement, and I believe that's coming up in the next year or two, but I would have to defer to my colleague. There's an actual schedule for that and I just don't have it at the ready.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. We'll now move to the government. Mr. Flynn.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Carol and John, for your presentation.

Towards the end of the presentation, you seemed to run out of time a little bit. Would you like to use any of this time to expand on page 10? That was the one I think you had to kind of rush through to get in under the wire. Is there anything you'd want to expand on?

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes. Page 10 certainly dealt with the role of the federal government in terms of supporting it. It's fair to say that the federal government has on a project-by-project basis been there in terms of providing support for various transportation-transit projects, but not on a sustained basis. We still do not have a commitment, and even in the most recent budget there was no commitment, for dedicated money for transit. We'll have to wait to see in 2014-15, as they roll out the \$47 billion over 10 years, I think it was, whether there will be something quite specifically for transit.

But certainly Minister Murray and Premier Wynne have both spoken about the need to speak with their counterparts in terms of impressing on them the need for a dedicated infrastructure and transit strategy at a national level.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Wonderful. Thank you very much for that answer.

I drive on the highways; I come from the other direction than the member from Durham. I think I'm not the only commuter who's driving in, thinking, "I wonder if these trucks have to be on the highway right now." We seem to be sharing the highway now on a daily basis with the transportation of goods. There's a lot of good in that; that means jobs; that means employment; that means expansion of the economy. So, pursuantly, we're uncomplaining about it.

Are there any innovative techniques that we can use, or any that are being used perhaps, in a transportation demand perspective, or from that perspective, that would allow for an evening-out of the capacity of the highway transportation system we have? Obviously, at rush hour it's really overtaxed, and at 3 o'clock in the morning, it's empty. Is there anything we're doing from a trucking perspective to alleviate any of those concerns?

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes. I'm going to talk about long combination vehicles, but the first thing I'd like to reference is that we also make sure that the trucks that are travelling are safe. That's really, really important as well. We have about 300 or so commercial truck inspectors, and truck stations where they're pulled over. I've actually been under those trucks, looking at the sort of things that they inspect.

But the one initiative that's important is certainly the long combination vehicle one, where you have a single truck that can carry twice the capacity of a tractor-trailer but is certainly restricted in terms of at the beginning and end of long weekends, restricted in terms of not driving during commute times, and restricted also in terms of not driving during the winter months, and also very specially trained drivers. We've had a very successful pilot or, in a sense, launch to the long combination vehicle program.

As a result of restrictions like, for example, not being able to drive during commute times, those firms, the companies, the shippers themselves have actually moved to evening and through-the-night trucking, which is really good, certainly to address congestion but also, they find, for the efficient movement of their own vehicles, it's better for them as well.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you. You mentioned something on road safety. You said that obviously it's something we should be proud of in the province of Ontario. We're either first or we're up there. Accidents do happen from time to time. Are we making any progress in cleaning up those accidents more quickly? Obviously, when I'm sitting in traffic behind a fender-bender, you wonder why it takes three hours to get the cars off the road. Any work on that?

Ms. Carol Layton: Yes, there is work on that. Certainly, the public awareness of that, working with the different police services as well as the OPP on that so people do understand that for certain collisions they don't have to wait there. But also there's work under way, again with the OPP, around major collisions and how we can be more efficient in terms of getting those vehicles—obviously, you have to do the police investigation, but then you want to work to move things, as soon as you can, off the highway.

The other point I'd make is actually through the area maintenance contracts that we have, that if there is any sort of damage to the roadway, or possibly to certain supporting structures and all of that, because we have the province under area maintenance contracts, we can quickly move them in and they can do the work that they do, as opposed to a longer process, and do whatever repair work is needed.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Great. Thank you very much for coming today. Thank you, Chair.

Ms. Carol Layton: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. Thank you for taking the time to be with us.

Ms. Carol Layton: I appreciate your time. Thank you.

TORONTO REGION BOARD OF TRADE

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Our next presenter is the Toronto board of trade: Carol Wilding and Juan Gomez, if you could come forward.

To the members, I understand our next presenter—the number of copies of his presentation is not readily available to all of you, so we'll provide one to each caucus. The Clerk will make sure that the rest of you get another copy after the meeting or sometime later.

Okay. Mr. Gomez?

Mr. Juan Gomez: Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 10 minutes for your presentation, and then we have five minutes for questions from each one of the various parties.

Mr. Juan Gomez: Thank you. I'm just speaking on behalf of Carol Wilding. My name is Juan Gomez. I'm director of policy for the Toronto Region Board of Trade. The board is pleased to have the opportunity to present the views of our membership on the critical issue of traffic congestion, which directly impacts the people, businesses and environment of Ontario's and Canada's largest urban region.

As you may know, the board turned an important corner on the debate about how to pay for our regional transportation plan, from the broad to the specific.

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My remarks today will focus on the recommendations in our new report, *A Green Light to Moving the Toronto Region: Paying for Public Transportation Expansion*, which was released on March 18 and is also our formal submission to the committee.

Our message to the committee is this: We can no longer defer the tough decisions on how to address our region's lack of mobility. In today's ultra-competitive global economy, our competitors are investing in infrastructure that is helping them attract investment, jobs and skilled workers. We, too, must act or fall behind. We can't continue to turn our back on solutions. We must implement dedicated revenue tools to improve our mobility and our economic competitiveness.

In survey after survey, the board's 250,000 business professionals and 10,000 members across the Toronto region have been emphatic: Traffic gridlock and inadequate transportation infrastructure is the number one public policy concern facing the Toronto region.

Whether we're talking about a company's goods or services, or just getting people to work on time, a lack of mobility is negatively impacting bottom lines. It's also taking a huge financial toll on our region's economy. As

the board has reported often, our region is losing approximately \$6 billion a year in productivity. That loss is headed to \$15 billion by 2031. This is represented in lost jobs, lost sales, less investment and greater costs, and it's been pointed out by many organizations, including the OECD, PwC and Colliers International; they have all identified congestion as the Achilles heel of our region's economy.

Of course, it wasn't always this way. In a 30-year period, from 1950 to 1980, our population grew by nearly two million and our region built nearly 400 kilometres of commuter rail track. But over the next 30 years, the construction of new track slowed to a crawl, and so did our mobility. While our population nearly doubled to six million people, during that time only an additional 43 kilometres of track were built. Our population effectively increased 100% and we only built 10% more track—startling, really. It's no coincidence as well that car trips grew by nearly 60% in that period.

Today, we have approximately 100,000 people a year moving into the Toronto region. This is having an overwhelming impact on the amount of time we spend commuting. Our average round trip is longer than most of our competitors—longer than Boston and Los Angeles; longer than Vancouver, Montreal and Calgary.

As the decades passed, so too did many ambitious plans from provincial and municipal governments of all political stripes: Network 2011, Let's Move, the rapid transportation program and Transit City, to name a few. But here's what we learned: It's easy to draw lines on a map. What's proven hard is the ability to pay for them both in strong and weak economies. Delay and cancellation of these grand plans has happened more often than not. We can't let history repeat itself.

Today, we have the \$50-billion Metrolinx regional transportation plan, the Big Move. It will mean more rail for GO and local transit operators, better highways to move goods and people efficiently, and more bike lanes.

We know tough decisions will have to be made. Simply looking to government to tighten belts and consider alternative financing methods won't be enough. Land value capture, P3s and more federal dollars will also have to be part of the equation. However, these are merely table stakes. All are necessary, but they won't come close to raising the revenue we need.

We are thus putting forward a suite of four revenue tools. They must be dedicated to funding the Big Move. They must be applied region-wide, to provide region-wide solutions to our region-wide challenges. These have been advanced through much public research, stakeholder consultation and economic analysis.

During the past three years, the board has consulted with its members, transportation experts and leaders in business, academia and government. We have worked with our board of directors and committees representing a wide range of industries and stakeholder organizations. We have also conducted focus groups, reviewed extensive public polling and surveyed our own members.

Building on this consultation and research, we are putting forward four revenue tools that we believe are

balanced, fair, economically responsible and should be given serious consideration. They are fair: Everybody contributes and everybody benefits—drivers, commuters, business and the public. They're balanced: We are recommending a mix of tools to reduce the risks in market fluctuations. And they're economically responsible: The economic effects are manageable. This is what the evidence that we've undertaken tells us.

As I've already said, we must act. The cost of doing nothing is much more expensive. Therefore, to support transport infrastructure expansion and our economy, we are recommending: (1) a regional sales tax; (2) a parking space levy; (3) a regional fuel tax; and (4) tolls on high-occupancy lanes.

Combined, these tools can raise much more than the \$2 billion we need annually to support the Big Move. The exact dollar amount or percentage for each revenue tool would of course need to be negotiated by the province, the municipalities and a variety of other stakeholders. Collecting this additional revenue, we must stress, must be transparent and accountable and must be dedicated to the Big Move. We can't say dedicated enough. It is crucial for the public to measure progress against the collection of these additional funds.

We recognize this is not an absolutist position. No new funding tool is without certain implementation challenges and, of course, critics. As this debate continues, greater public support may be found for a different combination than what we've put forward. But what is clear is that the debate has to be about the need for new revenue tools and the discussion about which ones are most appropriate to fund the needed expansion that we need to invest in.

To succeed, all of us will have to contribute, all levels of government, the public and the private sector. Talking about our congestion has become a regional obsession, so too has avoiding real solutions.

On June 1, Metrolinx is to hand to the provincial and municipal governments a financing strategy outlining how it proposes to raise the billions of dollars required for regional transit expansion. As we state in our discussion paper, we urge elected officials at all levels of government to rise to the occasion of this watershed moment and constructively work towards meeting this deadline. By doing so, they can honour the legacy of their predecessors, who, many decades ago, supported the kind of visionary long-term transportation investments which to this day we benefit from as a region, province and country.

Thank you. I'll gladly take questions.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We'll start this round of questioning with the third party. Mr. Marchese.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Juan. First of all, I want to congratulate the Toronto board of trade for being one of the leaders to talk about congestion and how that affects us all, not just people but business as well. You guys have been at the forefront, and I appreciate it. In short order, all three political parties are going to have

to announce what they're going to do by way of the revenue tools. But I've got a couple of questions.

Mr. Juan Gomez: Sure.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: There's been some discussion about the \$6-billion problem in terms of how that affects productivity and how that affects businesses. Can you speak a bit about the cost to businesses incurred by congestion and gridlock?

Mr. Juan Gomez: Sure. That \$6-billion figure covers two types of economic costs. Approximately half of that is costs that impact directly workers and commuting. It's increased gas costs and also the costs that are impacted through the environment. Excess congestion obviously causes increased emissions. That factors in the increased health costs, which are quite substantial, associated with that.

The second component is what covers direct impact on businesses. This is productivity-related impacts. So it's the cost around movement of goods, increased cost and delays that are impacted in the supply chain. A lot of the impacts are around getting goods to market in a timely fashion. There are considerable delays; that impacts supplies. In the economic modelling where that figure came from, it also impacts the ability of companies to have a broader market for their goods.

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Mr. Rosario Marchese: Got it. Great, thank you. Another part of the problem—and it has been a concern of mine because for the last 20 years or so we've been cutting corporate taxes to the tune, cumulatively, of about \$17 billion.

Another big concern of mine, which I stated two years back—and it has been picked up by Mr. Flaherty nationally and by the Bank of Canada, which is great—is that there is about \$560 billion of corporate money that's simply parked and not being spent, simply because they're worried about how to spend it and don't want their investors to be hurt.

The question I have for you: Do you think the reduction in corporate and business taxes over that time has played a role in the reduction of government capacity to invest in transit?

Mr. Juan Gomez: I don't think we can necessarily draw a direct connection. If you look at the whole issue of taxation around corporate taxes, just focusing in on the research we've done looking at how different jurisdictions fund public transportation through dedicated revenue streams, that particular type of tax is not generally used as an instrument for paying for public transit.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The fact that others don't use it: Do you think that's good or bad?

Mr. Juan Gomez: Based on a lot of the research we've looked at and other research, excessive corporate income taxes tend to be a regressive tax. If you look at how that tax gets translated, oftentimes it's through lower wages for workers, increased prices—so there are different ways that business is passing it on.

I think the other point to keep in mind in terms of the tax burden for businesses is that there's a provincial

corporate tax element and there's a federal corporate tax element as well. When you look at the combined corporate tax rate for most Canadian firms, it's about 25% or 26%, which is about the median OECD. So we're not the highest, but we're not the lowest.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Quick question: Apart from advocating for new revenue tools to support expansion of rapid transit over the next 25 years, does the board of trade see shorter-term, lower-cost actions that the government or businesses could take to reduce congestion—smarter planning policies, employee trip reduction programs, incentives to those who take transit?

Mr. Juan Gomez: Yes. In our report—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 30 seconds.

Mr. Juan Gomez: Yes—we've identified some of those elements that are supported.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But we don't hear that too often.

Mr. Juan Gomez: That's something that will hopefully come out, through what we're doing now through our transportation campaign. But in our report, we've specified the need to address the planning element as well in the congestion equation.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thanks very much, Juan.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The government side: Ms. Cansfield.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you, Mr. Gomez, for coming in and sharing with us the Toronto board of trade's perspective.

I noticed at the beginning—and I just sort of perused this—that you identified Highway 401 through to the US transportation system as the busiest highway in North America, and I agree with you; I concur. What I found fascinating, however, was that when you looked at your revenue tools—and you have identified a regional sales tax, a parking levy, a regional fuel tax and high-occupancy toll lanes. Part of me speaks to the issue of who travels on those roads. Quite frankly, the 401 is what I call a travel-through road, from Quebec and the Maritimes to the United States—and they're not delivering any goods on their way; they're just using our highway.

The last time I received the estimates—and Bruce is here; maybe he can confirm—it was about 16 years just from Mississauga to Durham to start to fix the 401, and when you finish in 16 years, you start all over again. Now, of course, we have the double semi-trailers and we have huge traffic that actually impacts that road significantly, and yet none of those people live in Ontario and none of them would be impacted by any of your recommended tools, with the exception maybe of the fuel tax, because they're not stopping here; they don't live here; they're not delivering anything here. I haven't read your full report, but that hasn't been addressed; yet you dismiss road tolls for the reason that they would be too politically—I think you identified in your report that road tolls would have strong political opposition both at the municipal and provincial government levels and would make mandatory implementation of such a tool a dim prospect in the future.

My question to you is: Had you considered the fact of who uses these roads? And if you're looking at user pay, was there a discussion around how you're going to deal with the fact that a significant portion—and we can all tell by those licence plates who is using our roads and, again, not putting the dollars into the infrastructure to support it through a tax base.

Mr. Juan Gomez: Yes. With respect to road tolls, what we heard a lot in our consultation was that there were two factors in addition to some of the political sensitivities. There were also the substantial implementation costs and start-up costs that would be associated with setting up a tolling system on our 400-series highways, including Highway 401. That would take—what we heard in terms of estimates to get that up and running—maybe four to five years.

There was also the concern—you point out that there are a lot of out-of-province, out-of-jurisdiction drivers—that it's still an important commuting corridor for people who live within the GTHA, and the concern was that there wouldn't be adequate public transportation options available at this time. So, from our perspective, we've seen tolls as perhaps sort of longer term. Short-to-medium term, I think we obviously need to get the revenue sources to pay for the investments in short order.

This is something where, over time, there are going to be fluctuations in revenue totals. For example, the fuel tax: With the increased efficiency of automobiles, that's a revenue source that may decline over time, and perhaps at a future date road tolls may be considered. But the message we got from a lot of our members in our consultations was that right now imposing road tolls without viable public transportation options just wasn't on.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I wasn't actually thinking of road tolls for cars; I was thinking for trucks. If we have 450,000 vehicles that travel across the 401 on a daily basis, I would suspect that about 100,000 to 120,000 of those are out-of-province trucks. To not access that revenue, because they impact our roads, seems to be something that we are missing and should be looking at in terms of finding some support. Why should Ontarians pick up the cost just because we happen to be a corridor between, let's say, Quebec, the Maritimes and the United States?

So I respectfully request that maybe you consider that in your deliberations when you go back, to look at that impact—what it would have in terms of a revenue toll. I'm not suggesting tolls per se, because you have other options here, but maybe something that can be done around the trucks.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. We'll now move to the opposition. Mr. MacLaren.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Mr. Gomez, it seems to be that we all know clearly that Toronto is way behind in transit and it would take, perhaps, \$35 billion to \$50 billion to catch up to where we'd like to be, so we could be an efficient, effective city. And we have, unfortunately, a government that's in massive debt and high unemployment, so the government's not really in a position to be spending the kind of monies that need to be spent.

In that context, would you comment or say a few words to the idea—or what would you think of the concept—of having the private sector design, build, pay for, operate, maintain and, of course, charge tolls for the transit we need, being subways, GO trains and 400-series highways?

Mr. Juan Gomez: As we said in our report, we're fully supportive of public-private partnerships where there is a business model that can bring projects to market earlier and efficiently. There are obviously a lot of good national and international examples of those types of arrangements where you have both private build and private operation.

Obviously, when you're dealing with public transit, virtually every jurisdiction includes a significant public component, and that includes the dedicated revenue sources we're talking about. But absolutely, all those types of options need to be on the table to look at ways we can deliver existing systems and future systems in an efficient fashion.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. John O'Toole: The real issue I want to find out in the work you've done—and I commend what the Toronto board of trade has done—could you provide for us any polling data you've done and who you've done the polling data with? That would be the first ask. I'd like that recorded, and perhaps you could table it with the Clerk of the Committee.

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We would like to have some idea, because there is going to be a lot of attention paid to your four points that you've made on new revenue tools—carefully chosen words—and also the taxation options that were on the table. I think my colleague asked about other funding mechanisms—the private sector, too, which you've clarified as well. My colleague Mr. Milligan may have a question or two, but that's really the most important part: how solid the data is, what groups were consulted with.

Mr. Juan Gomez: Okay. In terms of polling, I can provide the committee later with some of the earlier polling we've done. It has pointed to an increased—first, what the polling has demonstrated is that there is a heightened concern and awareness about the regional gridlock transportation issue. What it points to is, both in the 416 and 905, it is the number one issue of local concern.

Secondly, we've also seen in some of the polling an increased acceptance of potential for revenue tools, but what has to be stressed is that they must be dedicated—so, when the question is phrased, that it's openly transparent and accountable that that's the purpose it's being dedicated to. That's really what is the critical issue.

In terms of our membership, as I say, we've got over 10,000 members and 250,000 individual professional members. Approximately 60% of that membership were supportive of dedicated revenue tools. Since we've released our specific four, we haven't done subsequent polling ourselves. Obviously there's been some polling

that has been done by local media sources recently, but ourselves, we haven't done a specific poll on that.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Just to follow up, if I may—and I want to thank you for coming here, Mr. Gomez, and sharing your information and your insight—as I do traverse the 401 on a regular basis heading eastward and, of course, back here to Queen's Park, it is noted that traffic is on the increase. Obviously, it is something that we need to address.

Now, the polling that you have done—how recent is that polling? Is it updated?

Mr. Juan Gomez: Yes, our most recent poll that we did was late 2012; October 2012 was the latest that we've done.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much, and thank you for taking the time to be with us.

Mr. Juan Gomez: Thank you.

METROLINX

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Our next presenter is Metrolinx, Mr. Bruce McCuaig. You have 10 minutes for your presentation, and then we'll move to questions from all parties, five minutes each. You can start.

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Thank you very much, and thank you for the opportunity to present before the standing committee today. A copy of my presentation is being circulated around the room, and I'll just go through this very quickly so that we have an opportunity for conversation.

On slide 2, I'd just like to emphasize that congestion, as we all know, is a significant issue impacting the regional economy in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, also impacting our quality of life and the environment. Our mission at Metrolinx is to transform the region's transit and transportation system by doing three things. Those three things include increasing the capacity of our transportation system, improving its integration across the boundaries, and enhancing, of course, the service levels that are available to the public.

On slide number 3, there's some information on the cost of congestion to the economy here in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. You've heard from previous speakers about the \$6-billion annual cost of congestion, and generally speaking, 50% of that cost is attributed to individuals—the time that we all consume in terms of our trip to work, the cost of commuting and the cost to the environment. The other 50% is the cost to the economy specifically related to the impact of reduced reliability and the increased level of congestion in terms of getting goods to market.

By 2031, if we continue to grow in the way in which we've grown over the past 20 years and if we do not significantly expand our transportation and transit systems, that \$6-billion annual figure will grow to about \$15 billion—by 2031. Clearly, from an economic perspective, we have a clear case for action in terms of dealing with this level of congestion.

On the following slide, in terms of the environment, obviously congestion means that we impact our quality of the air environment, the emissions of greenhouse gases to the environment. Right now, excess congestion is contributing about 15% of regional greenhouse gas emissions to the environment. Clearly, by the extent that we can reduce congestion, we can significantly reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that occur in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, as well as other air quality benefits that we all experience in this region.

On the following slide is just a small indicator of some of the social impacts of congestion. You may have heard the figure that our average commute time on a daily basis currently is about 82 minutes per day. That's among the longest commuting times in North America. Again, if our population economy continues to grow over the next 20 to 25 years the way it has over the past 20 to 25 years, and we do not build the infrastructure that we require, that 82-minute average commute time will increase to about 109 minutes each and every day. That's the result of 100,000 people each and every year coming into the greater Toronto and Hamilton area to make it home.

We do have a solution, on slide number 6: It's the Big Move. Again, previous people have spoken about this. I really just emphasize four key points: One is, our objective is to increase the accessibility of rapid transit from the current about 42% in terms of the proximity of people to rapid transit to 81% through the expansion of the transit system while accommodating two million more people, and therefore not only avoiding the growth from our 82-minute average commuting time to 109 minutes, but actually seeing if we can reduce that average daily commute time. We do that by tripling the length of rapid transit across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions from passenger transportation by about 29%.

On slide number 7, we have a lot of work under way right now. I'm not going to go through this in detail, but there is about \$16 billion worth of investment in over 200 projects, which represents the largest program in a generation in terms of our transit and transportation system in this region. Whether it's York region and bus rapid transit, whether it's the Spadina subway extension to York region, the significant transformation occurring at Union Station, the Union Pearson Express, Toronto light rail transit and a variety of other projects, there's a significant construction build that's funded and is under way right now.

On slide number 8, we are looking now at the proposed next wave of projects. What is the value proposition that we can offer the people of this region, as well as the economy, in terms of dealing with our congestion challenges going forward? This suite of projects is based upon the growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe, as well as the Big Move, and has been identified as the next wave of priority projects based on a prioritization process and completing business case analysis across the region.

You can see that we've tried to include a suite of subway expansion projects; new rapid transit, whether

that's light rail transit or bus rapid transit, in all parts of the greater Toronto and Hamilton area; expansion to the GO Transit system and Union Pearson Express in terms of extending two-way, all-day service of GO across the region and electrification of major parts of the corridor; as well as—and I think this is an important point—investing in the local transportation system, whether that's roads or transit, because each and every trip begins or ends on a local part of the transit or transportation system.

On the following slide, this investment is a significant one of \$34 billion, but it also has significant benefits in terms of growing the economy and supporting new jobs across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

Clearly, over the next few slides the big focus of the conversation over the last few months and continuing on for the next few months is, how do we fund such a significant investment in our infrastructure? We do have a legislative framework that identifies that by June 1, Metrolinx is to provide its best advice to the province of Ontario and the municipalities on the kinds of revenue tools that may be used by the province or municipalities to support the implementation of the regional transportation plan, and that's been our focus of activity over the past few months and will continue over the next few months.

We did look at other jurisdictions. We looked at about 15 jurisdictions around the world, and I'll say, if there's one thing that really stands out—whether you look at Vancouver, Montreal, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York City, Paris or London—it's that, of course, all these jurisdictions rely on transfer payments from all levels of government, but we are unique. We're unique in that we're pretty much the only city region that relies 100% on transfer payments from government—and the annual discussion that we have with federal, provincial and municipal governments about our funding requirements. All of the other jurisdictions have some form of dedicated investment tool that allows them to plan for the future and have a sustained program.

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Some of the best practices, you can see, are identified here, including having a suite of tools, including building a key role for the private sector for the delivery of infrastructure, and improving accountability and transparency. Just last week, Metrolinx released a short list of investment tools, and this is, based on analysis, the public input that we've received over the past few months, feedback from stakeholders and municipalities, to amount to about a \$2-billion per year investment in the transportation and transit system.

We believe that one or more large revenue generators are required just by virtue of the scale of the investment that needs to be made in this region, but also that smaller tools can play a significant role that outweighs their monetary impact because of their policy implications. The example I'll use is land value capture, where you can more tightly integrate land use planning and transportation planning going forward.

As we've talked to the public in particular, we've heard that there's support for four key principles: a dedicated revenue stream, fairness in the distribution of costs and benefits, equity across the region so that no part of the greater Toronto and Hamilton area is left behind, and improved transparency and accountability.

As we move forward in terms of how we come to our final advice to the province and municipalities, we'll be looking at those four principles as well as five key selection criteria that include: a strong, predictable and durable revenue stream; reasonable cost and ease of implementation—we've heard time and time again that people do not want to see a significant administration built up that is required to administer an investment strategy; send price signals on how we consume and use our transportation system; promoting economic competitiveness because, in the end, this is about supporting the economy of this region; and promoting social fairness and equity, again, to make sure that any of the disproportionate impacts on lower incomes, for example, can be mitigated through the strategy going forward.

Our next steps include seeking public and stakeholder input on the shorter list of potential dedicated investment tools and reaching out to and speaking with our municipal partners. We're on track to release our final report and recommendations at the Metrolinx board of directors' meeting scheduled for May 27. We're inviting the public to learn more about the various tools that have been used around the world and to join this conversation through our website at www.bigmove.ca.

With that, I'm happy to answer any questions or comments that you may have. Thank you for your attention.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We will start this round of questioning with the government. Mr. Flynn.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you, Bruce, for your presentation—always interesting. You've quantified some things here, and sometimes people are afraid to do that. You've said that if the plan works, you will go from an average commute time of 82 minutes to 77 minutes, and that if we don't do anything, it will go up to 109 minutes. I think the average person on the street would think that five minutes isn't very much, so I thought I'd give you a little bit of a chance to expand on that if you wanted to.

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Absolutely. I would say that the five minutes is an average across the entire system. If you live and work along one of the key rapid-transit corridors, your benefit would be that much more significant. As an example, the people who live along the Eglinton corridor, with the construction of the light rail transit line, are going to be saving up to 20 minutes each way in their commute time, so 40 minutes a day. It's all obviously very sensitive to the kind of trip—where your origin and your destination are.

The other thing I would really like to emphasize is that we're adding 100,000 more people to this region each and every year. That's the equivalent of bringing Barrie in. That's the equivalent of bringing in, over 20-odd

years, the population of the greater Montreal area. Trying to build the infrastructure so that not only can you accommodate that growth but also actually reduce the average commute time is a significant undertaking.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: This just needs a yes or no, I think, Bruce. You said that there's going to be a corresponding decrease in greenhouse gases by 29%. I'm assuming that's 29% of the 15% that's caused by traffic congestion, not an overall 29%.

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: An overall 29%, but of course, that will be targeted mostly on the excess emissions that come as a result of congestion. Greenhouse gas emissions, just like other air quality emissions, go up significantly as there's more congestion in the system, so there will be a benefit above and beyond that 15%.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Okay; that's good news.

Prior to coming here about 10 years ago, I spent 18 years on regional and town council in Oakville and in the region of Halton. I'm probably as guilty as anybody, as any local politician: We seem to have put all the growth where the transit isn't, and then we wonder why we can't get the buses or the trains or whatever it is up to the people.

From a land use planning perspective, how integrated are you now into the system? When a community like Oakville, like Oshawa or like anywhere else is planning the residential growth, do they come and consult you directly as to how you're going to get those people to work in the morning?

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: This is actually a very strongly growing area of integration across both the transportation and land use planning areas. The growth plan was a significant start, the greenbelt strategy was a significant start, and the Big Move, and how they all connect is a key part of how we deal with these issues.

When we think of an investment strategy, we actually think of four elements, of which investment tools are just one element, and the first element has to be, how do we better integrate our long-term planning for land use and growth with transportation? Because if we can connect that as strongly as we possibly can, then that's probably the number one way in which we can address some of our congestion in this region.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: You point to other jurisdictions around the world as having some of the best practices. If you had to pick one jurisdiction that was doing it right, which one would it be?

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Well, first of all, I have to say there's no silver bullet, because when we look around the world, they all come from their existing culture, history and tradition, and what works there doesn't necessarily work in our context.

But there are a few key best practices. One is, regions that rely on a suite of tools—because if you use one single tool, you tend to disproportionately impact one segment of the population, first of all, and secondly, it's sensitive to cycles in terms of that part of the economy. So, for example, Los Angeles uses one tool: a sales tax. When the economy is buoyant and people are consuming,

that's a very strong tool. Right now, it's not so much a strong tool, and they're needing to deal with that. So having a balanced system, a suite of tools like Vancouver has and like New York City has, is one of the key best practices.

I think the second best practice is trying to link who's consuming and using the services and who's benefiting the service, so that there's fairness in that connection. When we look at places, again, like New York City, and when we look at places like Paris, they're trying to get that connection as positively as they can so that people feel that they're giving their fair share towards the transportation system.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Do I have much time left?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thirty seconds left.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Very specifically, where the GO train has worked well is on straight lines: Oshawa-Toronto, Toronto-Oakville-Burlington. Are there plans for that corridor that are going to make what we're doing well work even better?

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Absolutely. We have two key strategies for the GO system. One is to provide the same level of service that we currently have on the Lakeshore corridor, where we have two-way all-day service throughout the day. It's hourly service, and we'd like to increase that up to 30-minute service. But we'd like to have that level of service on the Milton corridor, the Georgetown corridor, Barrie, Stouffville, Richmond Hill—all of the corridors have that level of service. That's piece number one.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We have to move to the opposition: Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. John O'Toole: It's a pleasure to meet with you personally. I remember the days when you were ADM at transportation, so it's nothing new for you; you've been listening to it. Also, I'm sure you're paying very close attention to the forum on transportation futures going on today in Toronto, and the subject there is the mobility funding, kind of the same thing that's really talking about the Metrolinx challenge of new tools. Let's just call it—let's be honest. It's a new tax. What's the tax source? Consumption, use—whatever.

It's interesting, because there is sort of a driving thematic thing here. The Places to Grow document says it's the best. It's probably addressing my colleague's comment there with respect to development in the future, intensification, because you know full well that transit does not work where there's no density. It's simple.

All the municipal transits now get gas money by having a transit system. I use it. There's nobody on the buses—maybe first thing in the morning. There is none. The second largest tax increase in Durham region this year, next to policing, was transit, and I think we've hit the wall in terms of transit—not against transit but how it's being implemented and where it's being implemented.

1510

I have a couple of questions. Right now, there's such a populist—every time you pick up the media or turn on

the television, there's an extensive advertising campaign going on to bump this up. I think the board of trade was paid to implement this inquiry into these new tax tools, to drive the public awareness—I'm not trying to be a conspiracy theorist here, but I have a specific question. What is the current advertising campaign costing? You may not have the numbers off the top of your head, but I would like the numbers being spent on media, all forms of media—television etc.—for the Metrolinx push for more taxes. I'm going to call it taxes, not tools, because that's exactly what it is, and I understand that.

I've been to New York. I've been to Boston. I've been to Chicago. I've been to Vancouver. I have two daughters living in London, England. I get it. We don't have the density. We're a linear development, and I think you're going in the wrong directions at the wrong time for the wrong reasons, instead of to the right place at the right time for the right reasons. Toronto—I get it; the Pan Am Games and all that stuff.

The second part of this is: How much, in the last five years, have you contracted for advertising and public relations to deal with the Metrolinx Big Move challenge? Let's be honest. The Big Move—I was the critic at the time, in 2010 I think—\$50 billion over five years. That's \$5 billion a year for 10 years. That's \$5 billion of new money. That's capital; it's not operating. We already know full well that transit operates at a deficit from the fare box. It's the most heavily subsidized public service going. I think that if we try to do what we've been doing, it's going to be unsustainable, and that's really the dilemma you're in. I don't blame you personally, of course.

I'll leave it there. There's enough on the table. I could ask questions, because I use transit every day. I have a Presto card.

I'm going to let my colleague Jack talk about the Presto card.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You've got about a minute for your answer.

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Okay, I'll just very quickly touch base on a couple of things. One, transit is all about service, reliability and frequency. As we've seen, both in the 416 as well as the 905, if you provide those three things, you can grow your transit ridership significantly. So I do believe there is space for making this happen.

We are happy to look at and provide information about our advertising campaign for the Big Move over the past five years. It has been relatively small. In fact, one of the criticisms we've received in our discussions with the public and stakeholders is, "Why aren't you out there more, talking about the need for this kind of stuff?" But I'd be happy to provide the committee with that information.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. You've got about five seconds.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: What about Presto? It costs \$450 million more than Xerox submitted a bid for in Toronto. Can you explain that?

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Well, first of all, the original Presto system was for GO and the 905 transit agencies,

and it was basically delivered on budget to about \$250 million, procured competitively and delivered, and is operating right now, as the member indicated earlier.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Okay, we have to move to the third party. Mr. Marchese.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The Auditor General had a different view on that matter, but I don't have time for that one.

I do agree with you that when 100,000 people come to the GTA every year, it's going to create a problem. In fact, I'm not sure we're going to reduce congestion. If we get the three million people in the next 20, 25 years, we're in deep trouble. So I think we all realize that investments have to be made and money has to be found to create a better transit and transportation system. That's for sure.

You talked about transit service reliability, and that leads me to my question, because I think that's very, very true. Part of the challenge in getting people to support transit expansion is the regular delays in schedule for completion: the loss of a year on Transit City with the debate with the city of Toronto; delay on Eglinton until 2021-22 due to extra time to tender for P3s; lack of clarity about when the other projects would be completed, as examples, all-day GO service and electrification of the Union-Pearson line.

The question to you: How do we show immediate improvements to GTHA residents to rebuild the confidence that lines will actually be built soon?

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: I think that's a great question. One of our obligations is to provide, in a transparent and accountable way, what are our schedules, what are our budgets and then report regularly on how we're delivering to those schedules and budgets.

On the Union Pearson Express, for example, we're right on schedule and right on budget to what we indicated from the outset. So that's a success story.

We also need to make sure we can sustain all partners' commitments to projects right from the outset. I think that over the past generation or so in the Toronto region, we have a history of revisiting our plans and commitments a number of times. One of the things I've heard over and over again from the public is a desire that, once we make a commitment, we fulfill that commitment and not change as governments change. I would say yes, that's one of the common themes we've heard as we've talked to the public.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So when will electrification happen?

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Electrification? We're doing the environmental assessment for that right now and—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: We've been doing it for thousands of years, okay.

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Well, we're going to be completed the environmental assessment in 2014; and our objective, subject to having the funding available—which goes to the investment strategy—is to have electrification by 2017 on the Union Pearson Express.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And all-day GO service?

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Depends on the corridor. It's much more complex, because every corridor has its own story, but our objective for every corridor is that we would be able to say that we can have this level of service by a specific date, so that people can hold us to that.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: A related question: You've put a lot of effort under the Big Move, on the construction of new transit lines. This is important, but it creates a challenge, because something like 90% of the people in the 905 drive cars, and they want to see improvements to their commute on highways and roads. There are a number of strategies in the Big Move that relate to reducing congestion on roads: active transportation, efficiency of highways, transportation demand management, building transit-supportive communities—there seems to have been less emphasis on these strategies. Given that they're much less expensive than building out transit lines, why don't we focus on that as much or almost more? Because these would bring about greater tangible results for people, and it would seem to me that we should be doing a lot more of that. It seems we're not articulating that as best we can or talking about that as much as we should.

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: I have three quick examples of work that we're doing now in terms of the transit procurement initiative:

—to procure jointly, with all municipalities, so it's cheaper for them to provide buses;

—Smart Commute, where we're working with employers to improve the choices that employees have to come into the system; and

—mobility hubs to connect land use and transportation.

In our proposed funding plan, we actually set out that 25% of the funding that would be generated would be available for things like active transportation, transportation demand management, local roads and transit, because we understand that we can't just build significant new infrastructure. We also have to be contributing to those other very powerful pieces that may not cost that much but have significant benefits.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thanks very much.

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You've still got 30 seconds, if you wish. If not, I'll move on.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: There won't leave time for an answer. Move on, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much for joining us and thank you for your time.

Mr. Bruce McCuaig: Thank you very much.

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Our next presenter is Mr. Mitch Stambler from the TTC. You have 10 minutes for your presentation, and then we move to questions—five minutes from each party. You can start any time you wish.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: All right. Thanks, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon. I believe a gentleman is handing out copies of the presentation which I've brought; I'll just wait for him to finish. Okay.

Mr. Chair, there is no question that traffic congestion in Toronto is real, and it is serious. Traffic congestion reduces the quality of life which we all enjoy here, and it also impairs the environmental conditions in which we live. I would imagine that earlier today Ms. Wilding would have cited the estimate of the cost of congestion in Toronto at about \$6 billion per year, and recent polls have said that about 90% of people believe that congestion in Toronto has reached a crisis proportion. That's up from about 70% a couple of years ago.

Pretty much every forecast of traffic congestion in the GTA points to things getting worse; in particular, the Toronto official plan says that by 2031 the city's population will have increased by 20% and employment by 30% but, despite that fact, the official plan calls for no new roads in this city. If we have increasing demand to travel, with no new roads, clearly the precious road space which exists in Toronto should be used to move people, not cars.

There have been many different initiatives by different governments over the years to try to address the issue of congestion. There was the federal task force on urban issues, the provincial smart growth council, the GTA gridlock subcommittee and, most recently, Toronto's consultation efforts known as Feeling Congested?

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Pretty much every study and all research that's done on this issue eventually leads to the conclusion that transit is the best means of solving congestion. I think everybody understands and knows the importance of transit to cities: It stimulates economic growth, it supports employment, it provides accessibility for people with mobility impairment, and it influences land use. In addition to all of that, study after study shows that increased use of transit reduces traffic congestion.

The advantages of transit are that it is compatible with pretty much every type of land use; it is accessible to everybody—people of differing income levels and different mobility levels; it provides high capacity, which is expandable; and it is sustainable and environmentally friendly. It is usable by everybody, as shown at the bottom of page 8.

If we look at the top of page 9, if you look at the number of people who consume road space in those cars and put them all instead into a transit vehicle, it becomes very clear why transit is so very effective at reducing congestion. A single transit bus will replace 50 cars on the road. A streetcar in Toronto replaces about 70 cars. The new, high-capacity, accessible streetcars which will be put on our roads soon will replace about 120 cars. A subway train replaces about 1,000 cars. During peak periods alone, the Yonge subway removes about 140,000 cars from Toronto's roads. Every day, the TTC removes and replaces 1.5 million car trips in the city.

The good news is that while Toronto is obviously the most congested part of the province, it's also the city

where people are most eager, anxious and agreeable to using transit, and that's a good thing.

At the bottom of page 12, you'll see that three quarters of Toronto residents use the TTC at least once a week, and about one quarter of residents take transit at least once a day. If we look at the number of trips entering into various parts of the city, in the morning peak period you'll see what a huge number of trips in Toronto are taken by transit. That trend is continuing and increasingly unabatedly, as you can see at the bottom of page 13.

It is important, of course, that we continue to expand rapid transit, such as the completed—well, the partially completed Sheppard subway, the current construction of the Spadina subway and the current Metrolinx construction of the various light rail lines in Toronto, each of which will remove a large number of car trips from Toronto. But if this committee wants to recommend action by the provincial government, we should never lose focus on the much-unsung hero, the low-cost, proven workhorse of transit: the bus. Not everything that we do to improve—

Interjection.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: I'm sorry? Yes, of course, sir.

Not every investment that the provincial government makes in transit must be a high-cost, big-ticket item like a subway. In fact, it may surprise you to know that fully 70% of the trips made on the TTC every day use buses for part or all of their trip. So if the provincial government wanted to do something quick, low-cost, effective, immediate and achievable in the short term, then investing in more buses in Toronto would be a very wise choice. I've given some examples here, at the bottom of page 16, that if the province were to invest in simply more buses for the TTC, we could use them, for example, to reduce crowding during peak periods on all of our bus routes. As service becomes less crowded and more comfortable, it's more attractive, and more people will ride transit. That's just a proven fact.

More buses in Toronto would allow the TTC to introduce a new network of 21 bus routes, each of which would provide service every 10 minutes or better, all day and all evening. More buses provided to the TTC in Toronto would allow the TTC to introduce a new network of 19 new express bus routes, which would also be very attractive to many people.

More buses in Toronto would allow us to implement more initiatives like the bus rapid transit facility currently operating between Downsview subway station and York University, shown on page 18. There are other opportunities for bus rapid transit which are being studied and could be implemented in Toronto.

A reasonable question is, how confident are we that investing in buses, as opposed to the much-more-touted light rail and subway—how confident can we be that that would really attract more people to transit and reduce congestion?

Well, back in 2003, the TTC introduced what we called our Ridership Growth Strategy. That was really focused almost entirely on improvements in bus service.

On page 20, you'll see that as part of that strategy, we implemented significant improvements to peak-period bus services across the city as well as increasing the amount and frequency of off-peak bus service right throughout the city.

As you can see on page 21, it can be no coincidence that the increase—the dramatic increase—in ridership which has been occurring in Toronto coincides with the implementation of the Ridership Growth Strategy starting in 2003.

In fact, an interesting pattern in Toronto, which distinguishes the TTC from so many other cities, is that in Toronto every day, the TTC carries more people during off-peak periods than we do during peak, which is to say people in the city believe that transit is an integral part of their lifestyle. It's not just something that they're forced to take to get to work because roads are too congested. They take transit all day, for all kinds of trip purposes, every day of the week. So the province has a great opportunity in Toronto to make transit a more effective and more attractive option, because the people in this city really support transit and use it.

If the province wanted to provide more funding for buses, I would suggest or recommend that the province put conditions on that, because congestion makes our transit services and our bus services also move more slowly. TTC buses, TTC streetcars—everything operating in mixed traffic operates more slowly and gets stuck in congestion, just like everybody else does, using our roads. In fact, looking back over a 10-year period at the TTC, in order to offset the slowdown in transit operating speeds which results from congestion, the TTC had to add 20 more buses to streets and another eight streetcars, which together constitute about \$37 million in capital costs and an increase in operating costs of \$15 million annually. That doesn't really provide more service to people. It's the cost of offsetting the slowdown in transit operating speeds.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 15 seconds left.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Yes, Mr. Chair.

Therefore, if there were an interest by the province, it should put conditions on such funding, such as requiring the municipality to provide transit-supportive initiatives like queue-jump lanes.

Mr. Chair, I'll conclude just by saying transit is an excellent solution for congestion. There are opportunities for the provincial government to do this at low cost.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. I have to move to questions.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The official opposition, Mr. MacLaren.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is about Presto. I'm aware that the TTC issued a tendered process about two years ago, and the Xerox company came in \$450 million cheaper than the Presto card system. They also have developed an open-fare system, which Presto has not. Yet Toronto chose to sign a contract with Presto. Could you explain that to us?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: I would say, Mr. Chair, there are two reasons. One is that it is absolutely critical that the TTC be part of an integrated transit system for the GTA. Many different people ask about the integration of services. What is interesting is that transit services in the GTA, or across Toronto's boundaries, are very well integrated. It's the fares that are not. It is the fact that people have to reach into their pocket and pay twice that is a big deterrent to people travelling between regions.

One of the important motivations for the TTC signing on is because we need to have an integrated fare system whereby people in York region or Peel or Durham can travel unimpeded or, as the saying goes, seamlessly between Toronto and the other regions.

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The second interesting finding is that while the TTC was certainly interested and intrigued by the Xerox offer of a free-fare system, or a lower-cost fare system—open payment—it is my understanding that most recently, that very technology that they were offering to us has in fact had significant technological problems and is not working at all the way they thought. If we had gone that route, it might have put us further behind the eight ball than we are today. So I'm not sure that that really would have been—this is a little bit of Monday morning quarterbacking, but it might have actually put us in a bit of a pickle right now, because I believe that they're having trouble with that technology.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Well, I understand the need for an integrated system across the greater Toronto area and in fact across the province, including Ottawa. I would suggest to you that the Xerox system does work, because it's in place in other cities as an open-fare system, and Presto has not yet developed that. So I'm not so sure it would have caused you a problem; I think it might have solved your problems.

Was it true that gas tax money was threatened to be withheld from the province if, in fact, you didn't sign a Presto contract?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Mr. Chair, I am not in the finance area. I'm honestly, honestly not sure about what sort of negotiations might have taken place. In all honesty, I'm not sure I could answer that knowledgeably.

Mr. John O'Toole: We'd like you to provide the committee with the answer to that question. You could go to the people who are in charge to get the answer.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair—if the honourable member could kindly repeat that. I'm not sure what I'm being asked.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Do you want to repeat the question?

Mr. John O'Toole: The question you were asked is, were you on the condition of signing on to Presto to get the gas tax, and if you don't know the information, could you please provide that to the committee?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: I think that would be a better approach, Mr. Chair, yes. Because I'm really not sure.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You still have a minute and a half.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: If I may? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Obviously, the PC caucus and Tim Hudak are very aware that transportation is a huge concern here in the GTA and in the Hamilton area as well. What I'm hearing today from yourself by your own admission is that subways tend to be the preferred way of transit—it replaces 1,000 cars; that's impressive—but you yourself pushed buses.

My question then is: How many new buses would we be looking at, and what would the cost initially be to increase that fleet—also, obviously, garage space, repairs etc.—and how much would that cost annually to run that increased number of buses?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: First, just a point of clarification: I don't believe, or at least I didn't intend to suggest, that the TTC favours subways over other modes. In fact, the TTC has been a very strong proponent of light rail because with light rail, one can provide all the capacity that is needed in a city of this size, as opposed to, say, a New York or a London or a Berlin or something, and do that in any given quarter at about 25% of the cost of a subway. So in fact, out of pure respect for taxpayers' dollars and trying to make the very best use of taxpayers' dollars, the TTC has been advocating light rail rather than subway.

Of course, subways are great. Everybody loves subways. But we're very, very mindful that government funding is extremely limited and subways are extraordinarily expensive. I just say they're well warranted in London or New York, but we are not London or New York so we don't believe we have need for such high-capacity transit in most corridors.

In terms of how many buses would be required, I daresay there is almost an unlimited number of great things the TTC could do for Toronto with more buses, but a bus garage typically holds 250 buses. We are pretty much out of capacity, so for any significant increase in bus service, we'd need a new bus garage. That costs about \$90 million to build.

Then, say—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I will have to cut you off now. Time is up.

The third party.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: This is a serious question: Do you think we could fund subways through casino revenues and/or efficiencies? If it's too political, just tell me.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: I certainly wouldn't want to delve into the political side of this. The only comment I'd make is that subways—in fact, most big transit investments, but subways in particular—are phenomenally expensive. I think that most people fail to appreciate how expensive it is to build it.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It's \$400 million per kilometre, more or less?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Per kilometre. So a major subway line can typically be—well, let's say the downtown relief line that's being considered right now, depending on where it's built and when it's built, would probably

cost between \$4 billion and \$7 billion to construct. To the best of my knowledge, as a non-financial person, I don't know that a casino could provide funding of that magnitude.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It would be hard.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: It would be hard.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Tell me, what does Metrolinx think about the bus strategy that you were proposing? Because it's a very practical one and a useful one.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Well, I believe that—I'm not sure if Mr. McCuaig is still with us or if he's left, but—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: He's not here.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: He's not here? Okay. What I would say, Mr. Chair, is that Metrolinx has, quite understandably, focused on higher capacity, higher-speed services that will benefit inter-regional travel, which is what their main mandate is. To a very large degree, they take the position that local transit services, services that will be used almost exclusively within a municipality, are the responsibility of that municipality. So, while they clearly support bus services by virtue of, say, the procurement strategy, which I just heard Mr. McCuaig mention, they typically have not taken responsibility for initiatives like this. I think they support it, but it's not sort of the league they're playing in at this moment.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I just have a couple of questions for you. As simple as it may seem, can you define "gridlock" briefly?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: I believe that gridlock is when the volume of traffic on roads is either at or exceeding the capacity of the roadway such that the throughput grinds down to something close to zero because vehicles simply cannot—there's not enough space on the road to accommodate all the vehicles wishing to use it.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Okay. In addition to high-volume usage, would you say that gridlock could also include things like road closures, slow traffic as a result of accidents or poor road maintenance?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Mr. Chair, I would say that those are certainly things that can contribute to poor traffic operations on an interim basis, but I believe that the problems which are much talked about in this city are essentially chronic and long-term deficiencies of road capacity, which are not typically linked to, say, a temporary road closure or an accident.

I would say that the intersections in the city of Toronto, which are really the control valves for traffic, are all operating—virtually every one of them is operating at their maximum capacity right now, and that's sort of a permanent chronic condition, not a temporary thing.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I hear you. What about areas, if you can imagine this, where there's maybe only one route to get to your destination? Say there were pretty ongoing, regular, constant issues with road closures due to accidents or poor road maintenance. Would you say that that, then, in that particular case—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have about 30 seconds.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: —in that particular location, would contribute to gridlock?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: I believe, Mr. Chair, it would. Sure.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Okay. One final question: Would you say that in order to prevent gridlock, we would need to take steps in those instances to ensure alternate routes are available, whether they're serviced by public transportation or otherwise?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Well, Mr. Chair, I would truly view that as a policy question which a municipality has to deal with, because if that alternative route meant, say, building a new road in a municipality or a neighbourhood which didn't want it, then they might not choose to do that.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. I have to move to the government side. Mr. Colle?

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Stambler, for your usual insightful and penetrating comments that very few people have the ability to express as well as you have. As usual, you're right to the point.

I just want to ask you one question, because I think it sort of clarifies something that was said here earlier, when I heard a comment from a member of the opposition saying that public transit was one of the most heavily subsidized of all public services. In other words, he was saying we've got more subsidies for transit than we do for health care and education.

I think you should put on the record for my esteemed colleagues what percentage of Toronto transit revenues come out of the fare box that the users pay. Unlike for education, unlike for health care, beyond the taxes they pay in property tax and everything else, what do the users pay for public transit in that fare box? Whether they use GO Transit, whether they use the TTC, what do the users pay in Toronto?

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Mr. Mitch Stambler: Mr. Chair, in Toronto and for the Toronto Transit Commission, presently, 72% of operating costs are paid for through fare revenues from users. I believe that for GO Transit, somewhere in the range of 90% of their operating costs are paid by the user.

Mr. Mike Colle: Isn't that one of the highest levels of user contributions to transit anywhere in the world?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Mr. Chair, it is absolutely among the very highest, if not the highest, in the world.

Mr. Mike Colle: We should thank you for putting that on the record.

You can see the dilemma we're facing here. They love subways. They don't understand that it costs \$400 million a kilometre. They're against paying for the subways. They don't want to have tolls. They don't want to have road pricing. Even the NDP are saying, "Well, I don't know. This could be a tax. We're going to be paying for subways and transit." Everybody wants electrification of GO lines. They want all-day GO service. They want sub-

ways everywhere. Yet they're very reluctant to talk about funding for this heavy-rail/light-rail transit infrastructure.

Therefore, you have come up with a very pragmatic state of affairs—that if you really want to take one "quick" step towards reducing gridlock and getting more people on transit, there's something on the table that is proven, affordable and doesn't need the infrastructure work and tunneling and electrification: good old-fashioned buses. What does a bus cost? What does a subway cost?

Mr. Mitch Stambler: Mr. Chair, I'm not sure that I'm up to speed on all of the latest procurement, but a current-technology bus is typically in the range of, I believe, \$600,000. I'm sure I'm out of whack on subways because this is not an area I specialize in, but a subway probably costs—about \$9 million for a train.

Mr. Mike Colle: I just have my old history with the TTC, that I want to put this on the record: that for all of us, in terms of looking at congestion, I, like most people in Toronto—we love our light rail. We love our subways. We love our streetcars, especially.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 30 seconds left.

Mr. Mike Colle: But we have to also maybe recommend, as one alternative for reducing congestion, a re-investment in buses, in dedicated lanes—HOV lanes with buses. They work, they're affordable, and you can do it "tomorrow."

Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Stambler.

Mr. Mitch Stambler: You're welcome.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Stambler, thank you very much for being here.

Mr. John O'Toole: Just for the record—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'm sorry, I have to move to the next deputant.

Mr. John O'Toole: Point of order, Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order.

Mr. John O'Toole: For the record, I would like it that the member for Eglinton–Lawrence is on the record as saying he wants gondolas—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): That's not a point of order.

SHARE THE ROAD CYCLING COALITION

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We'll move to the next deputant: Share the Road Cycling Coalition, Eleanor McMahon.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'll ask members to show a little bit of respect to the deputants.

Just for the information of those who are in the audience, the coffee and refreshments are available to everybody, so don't be shy.

You have five minutes for your presentation, and we'll move to five minutes of questioning from each party.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm going to move lightning-fast, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to send greetings to all members of the committee. I see around the table many people I've had the pleasure of working with. It's nice to see you.

Today I'm going to talk about cycling, Mr. Chair. Inside this slide deck is information relative to our pre-budget submission that we just tabled, a bit of a snapshot on cycling in Ontario—because we're an Ontario-based organization, so I have some polling data to share that's fairly relevant, I think. In general, we're going to talk about making cycling an increased part of the daily commute and how we think that contributes to congestion.

With your indulgence, Mr. Chair, the first six pages—since I'm speedy today—really have to do with our organization and who we are and what we do. Most members of the committee can either read that in their reference time or, certainly, know who we are.

I'd like to start our provincial ask for budget 2013 with apologies, because there are no page numbers on these. Sorry, everyone: a little slip on my part.

So here we are: We ask that the government divert \$25 million, or 1% of the budget, to community cycling infrastructure this year, creating the Ontario bicycling investment fund. This would contribute to the development of the Ontario cycling network highlighted in the recent release of the Ontario bicycle strategy, which I released with Minister Chiarelli in November. It would enhance economic development. It would also create the kind of active transportation corridors in municipalities that this committee has been discussing. And, of course, cycling education is part of that conversation relevant to the coroner's review.

Next page: Healthy children in our future is a critical piece to all of us, I think, so funding active and safer school programs is part of our ask, creating that winning condition. Busing costs \$800 million in Ontario. If we had ways to get our children cycling and walking to schools, that would obviously be mitigated and we'd have healthier children, lower health care costs etc. Of course, combating congestion in the communities during those peak travel hours when children are being driven to school is in all of our interests, I think.

If we move on to the emerging context in Ontario, a few pictures here, breaking up the words, showing all the mass participation rides. Most of the committee members are aware of them. A number of them take place in Toronto. We hold seven rides across the province, so Toronto doesn't own that.

I want to share some public opinion data from 2012. The sample stuff is in there. If you look at who is cycling in Ontario now, the snapshot will tell you that 28% of Ontarians cycle at least monthly: Some cycle daily or almost every day, some weekly or almost weekly, and then, of course, 12% monthly or almost monthly. High numbers, good numbers, we think, for the province of Ontario.

Next slide: 4% of Ontarians say they ride their bike daily etc.

Mr. Chair, the members of the committee will be familiar with the conversation around cycling, which,

unfortunately, is altogether too polarized on occasion. Is there a war on the car, or anything else, for that matter? I say this quite tongue in cheek, with your permission. We would say not, given that if you look at this polling sample, 80% of Ontarians cycle, with 83% of the total sample driving a car. If you turn the next page, this is explained. Driving a car at least weekly is just about as common for cyclists as it is everybody else, sort of demonstrating that we're all the same people trying to share the road, so the rhetoric needs to change.

If we look at pent-up demand in the province, a majority of Ontarians say that they'd like to ride more. This is important for all kinds of reasons: relative congestion, economic development, and our health, of course.

If you look at the next page, it's illustrated quite nicely by the two bike wheels: 28% of Ontarians cycle now; 58% want to cycle more. It's kind of interesting when you think of the pent-up demand and the potential to mitigate congestion with those short trips.

Turning to the next page, less relevant, I think: unlocking that pent-up demand. If we think about what's going to get people on their bicycle, the next two pages address that specifically.

When you look at the graph, more cycling infrastructure is going to get us there.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): About one minute.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to speed right through.

I wanted to focus on these polling numbers because I think they demonstrate clearly that more Ontarians want to cycle more. The next couple of slides speak to that pent-up demand even more.

If I could draw the committee's attention to the graphs that follow, I'm now looking at government action. I'm moving along quickly.

When we asked Ontarians why the provincial government should invest, they gave us a variety of reasons in response to our questions. I draw your attention to the fact that they think that a portion of revenue from gas taxes should be directed to cycling and cycling infrastructure. Fifty-nine per cent of Ontarians agree that our 1% solution is on the money.

Moving right along—and I'm trying to finish quickly here—the second slide that talks about government action, with the four squares: What does that tell us? That 70% of Ontarians think investment in cycling is a good idea. It's broken up into a couple of areas. Some say don't spend much money. The good news is, cycling is cheap and there are a lot of things that we can do.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I tried to make the best of my five minutes. There's lots in here, but I'm happy to just chat.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions? Mr. Marchese.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Eleanor, for coming again.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: My pleasure.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: My bicycle is ready to go.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Excellent.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It's about 40 years old, but it still works.

Eleanor, just a quick question for you, because you might know better than me. The consultations on the cycling strategy obviously have happened.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: When do you think it will be completed? Maybe they speak to you more than they speak to us.

1550

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Through you, Mr. Chair, I can tell you a couple of things. There have been over a thousand submissions to the strategy, which I think is extremely heartening, and we held a number of consultations. I hope to meet the minister in the next couple of weeks and perhaps he'll share that information with me. Talking to officials, they're not sure. It's not finished yet; it's a work in progress. Certainly, the change in minister and so on and so forth has meant that that's taken a little bit longer than they may have wanted, but it's on its way. You can be sure that we're going to get it seen very soon.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Of course. It's always on its way.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I know.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It's always a question of when.

One of the questions I had asked the ministry was something that I think is of concern to you, because we think the Highway Traffic Act is outdated and is a barrier to sustainability mobility.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Indeed.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And we think changes are needed to encourage cycling safety, cycling infrastructure and complete streets. They're saying this is part of their review, although I don't know how old this act is; the other one is 80 years old, the Public Vehicles Act. This is probably very old as well—I forget how old it is—in terms of changes that haven't been made. Why do you think the government has been so slow to react to changes that would include cycling infrastructure and cycling safety and complete streets, which we know more and more people want? Why do you think they are so slow?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Through you, Mr. Chair, I don't really know the answer to that question. What I can tell you is that the cycling policy hasn't been renewed in 20 years. When we started this work five years ago it was front and centre on our plate, and it has taken us all a while to move in that direction, perhaps longer than we might have wanted. But it's here now. I took part in a ministry-led review of the Highway Traffic Act, and so I know that that has happened. Organizations like ours have contributed and told the ministry what we think should happen, including a one-metre passing law, which of course Nova Scotia and over 20 US States now have to make our roads safer. Complete streets language within the official policies and plans in municipalities is something we've advocated for. So soon. I know I'm sounding

like it's coming, but we're doing our best to press as hard as we can.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So those consultations happened—

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Correct.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: —when?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Sorry, I'm having a brain freeze.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: A year ago? Two years ago?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: No, no, within the last month and a half—very, very recently.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And the consultations are over?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes, they are.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So they're just putting it all together?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes, they're putting it all together and it's going to take all of us to make sure that it happens, and quickly. I'll look forward to working with you on that.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: We'll wait for it. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The government side.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you, Eleanor, for your presentation. Maybe the members of committee don't know that you have a very personal history with cycling and safety, and I really commend you for taking this up as a cause. It's not easy to do that, but I think your work is going to help a lot of people ride safely—motorists and cyclists. Thank you for doing that over all these years.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you.

Mr. Mike Colle: I guess the question I have is that with cycling I think there's an obvious friction that sometimes occurs, because I think we all have a little bit of road rage. I get rage when I ride on the bus or the subway. It seems that when we're moving in space there's always a bit of tension. Is there any way we can remind people that every time we see a person—let's say in an urban setting, especially in the GTA and Hamilton area—who decides to take a bicycle to work, they are removing cars off the road so there's more room for others on the road with their cars and trucks that have to deliver things etc.? Do we have any figures on how many cars might be taken off the road by people cycling at peak periods? Is there any kind of data on that?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you for the question. Through you, Mr. Chair, not to my knowledge. Most of the data that we work with focuses on mode share—who's riding today and who wants to ride—in the context of what I presented to you, so I don't know. I'm fond of saying, because it's true, that the bike in front of you is the car that isn't. I think that's anecdotally a good argument, but I don't have figures off the top of my head of how many vehicles get removed from the road when people choose to take bikes.

But I can tell you this: Bike-friendly and walk-friendly cities are economically viable cities, and that's clear around the globe. Since we live in a mobile workforce and we're trying to attract talented workers to our shores

and to our country, workers of all kinds—people want to live in cities where they have a choice of transportation, and making cycling part of that daily choice, since it's already part of people's daily transportation choice in a growing way, is good for all of us. It's good for our economy, good for our environment and good for our health.

Mr. Mike Colle: The other thing is, I think maybe what this committee should be trying to recommend, and I hope we do, is that as we widen roads or do road improvements or highway improvements, if we could think ahead and use a part of that road right-of-way segregated off to the side, the shoulder, whatever it is—I know Norm Miller from Muskoka had a bill to that regard—that would get rid of some of that friction. In Holland, there's that totally segregated—you can ride right across the Netherlands and be on your own right-of-way with your bicycle. How can we maybe put something in our recommendations to start to get to that point where we plan ahead so we don't have that stress that exists between motorists and cyclists?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you for the question. Through you, Mr. Chair, there are a couple of options. In the coroner's review from last June and then in the cycling strategy, there's recommendations about complete streets language, which is a way of saying that when a road is redesigned or upgraded, it should be done for all modes of transportation, and it should be done so in concert with the vulnerable road users: cyclists and pedestrians. If the province were to consider making complete streets the law of Ontario, for example, and working within the municipal frameworks to do that, I think it would be helpful. We have to do a lot more to connect land use planning with mobility. I think if the committee were to make some recommendations around that, that would be enormously helpful.

Of course, modernizing the Highway Traffic Act has to be part of the conversation because it's a big part of governing how we share the road, or don't. It hasn't been done in a long time, so I'd like to see that kind of recommendation as well. Of course, we've heard municipality after municipality tell us that they want a predictable source of funding for active transportation, and I think that's critical. That's why it's in there.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I have 30 seconds, if you can make it quick.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Okay, I have a very quick question. If you want to modernize the highway act, are you then suggesting that there could be the possibility of licensing bicyclists? When you're looking at from a current 4% to 12%, putting that infrastructure in—I think you'd asked for \$69 million in the budget to do that—is there a consideration for the issue around licensing? That is the biggest complaint that I get, the fact that cyclists don't obey the rules of the road.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Through you, Mr. Chair, two things in that regard: What I generally say about licensing is that a licence is not a predictor of good behaviour. Lots of people have a car licence and still misbehave. We're all misbehaving at any given time. To set up a licensing regime—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I have to cut you off and move on. Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you very much, Eleanor, for your presentation and for the work you've done on road safety and the Share the Road campaign. I respect the work and the motive behind it. It's important.

You've tabled a significant report here, and you really were rushed; by my view, the principle presenters would have had more time to produce, or present, and the committee should consider that in any further discussion on how this committee could move forward. It would be appropriate to ask if you could summarize your recommendations and table them with the committee. That would be the most succinct way for us to make sure we've addressed and respond to the points you've made and the work you put into it, the survey in 2012; and the report on cycling I think you've just presented. Just recently I read in the media that you presented your report on cycling strategy, or something, I read.

I just have a couple of specific questions. I think on the other side they've kind of talked about it. The first question that comes to mind is sort of in the context of Ms. Cansfield, who was a minister at one time, and they had questions on slow-moving vehicles generally. These are bicycles, motorized bicycles, the whole idea of different varieties of vehicles, not just bicycles, motor-assisted—all kinds. That's a very important thing for you to get in on so that you have a larger lobby group. Cycling for all people at all ages really isn't one of the answers with an aging population, but I'm just putting that on the table for you.

But the question that came from the licensing, which I think is paramount, is, how do you propose the cyclists would contribute to this solution of having a lane on every road dedicated specifically for bicycles, tricycles? How would they contribute? How would they pay for it?

1600

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Through you, Mr. Chair, I'm not sure I understand. I thought that our taxes went towards paying for roads and infrastructure and so on.

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes, that's true. How's it working?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: So I'm a taxpayer. I drive and I ride my bicycle. I'm like 89% of Ontarians, so we're already paying the same, and since most—

Mr. John O'Toole: Well, you're going to be paying more—that's my point—somehow.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Well, most Ontarians—you know, to pay more for safety, with all due respect, is like asking car drivers to pay more for safety. Infrastructure is what keeps us safe—

Mr. John O'Toole: Well, I guess I'm not really being clear enough in the way I pose the question. What's going to happen here is we heard from TTC that 76% of their revenue comes from the users, and they say the GO train is higher than that, and I'm saying that the car is going to be penalized—for sure, somehow. It's either through licensing or road tolls or scanners or gas tax or whatever else. It's already in the new tools.

The cyclists need to have a response other than, “I’m already paying enough.” I kind of agree with that, but you aren’t. That’s what Kathleen Wynne thinks, that we’re not paying enough, and she’s going to increase the HST, probably to 15%—that’s a nice round number; it’s easy to calculate—rather than the 13%.

But I’m saying there’s going to be more tax to fix this gridlock issue, period. Now, it’s a tax. Are you paying enough? I’ll ask you that question then. Or could you pay a little more?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Through you, Mr. Chair, as a cyclist and a motorist, I think that I am paying my fair share of taxes now in terms of my cycling infrastructure piece. Ontario is so far behind, so far behind—

Mr. John O’Toole: Quebec is way ahead; I get that.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. O’Toole, I’d ask you to allow her to answer.

Mr. John O’Toole: We’re having a dialogue. We’re having a dialogue, okay?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): No, no dialogues; question and answer.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: So I would have to tell you that if you’re thinking about charging cyclists a levy—

Mr. John O’Toole: Not me.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Sorry. I don’t mean to put words in your mouth; I’m trying to understand your question.

Cyclists are a net benefit to the economy. We’re not taking away from the economy. We’re less wear and tear on the roads, we’re reducing health care costs, we’re contributing to clean air, so we’re actually adding to the economy.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. I will move on.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would remind all members that the deputants are here to provide us information, and we shouldn’t be badgering the witness. I would ask you to ask the question and wait for an answer.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much, and thank you for taking the time.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you. I’m going to get in my car now.

SOUTHERN ONTARIO GATEWAY COUNCIL

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The next deputant is Mr. John Best from the Southern Ontario Gateway Council. Mr. Best, you have five minutes for your presentation, and then we have questions of five minutes from each party.

Mr. John Best: Thank you for this opportunity. For those of you not familiar with the Southern Ontario Gateway Council, very briefly, we’re a transportation forum whose focus is on goods movement. We’ve heard a lot of discussion about people movement today, and so

I’ll be coming at it from a slightly different view, but let me say at the outset that the last time I was here was about six years ago, and I was recommending at that time that Metrolinx be allowed to be established and that you give them the money and tools to do the job. So it may sound a bit like roads versus transit, but that’s not where we’re coming from.

Our members include railways, the St. Lawrence Seaway, port of Toronto and Hamilton, Hamilton airport, and then we have large carriers like Canadian Tire and Purolator as members, so our focus is goods movement.

I think one of our concerns is that if you look at the national economy right now, we got through the recession in pretty good shape, but if you think about it, it was really because in many ways our resource economy was so strong that it offset what was happening here in Ontario.

You look at Alberta today with a huge deficit, oil prices going down, and I guess the question is, if Canada is going to continue to be a major economic force, some of the onus is going to come back on Ontario with our advanced manufacturing economy. And if that’s going to happen, we’re going to need the tools, and I’m thinking in terms of the infrastructure that will be required to operate a largely manufacturing economy. Certainly, the kind of advanced manufacturing that we’re going to be looking for will be taking a hard look at the quality of our transportation system, and they’ll be looking at both people and goods movement when they make those decisions.

We’ve spent a lot of time at the gateway council—and by the way, I’m probably going to get you back on time here—over the last seven years studying congestion in southern Ontario. The one thing that’s very clear is that there will be no single solution to the problem. One piece of the puzzle clearly is transit. We have long supported the efforts of Metrolinx through the Big Move to divert more traffic to public transit.

What we worry about is when we’re here sometimes is that we hear people talk and there’s a tendency to think about the Big Move in the context of it is the only solution, that if we just throw enough money at transit, the problem is solved. But even in their research, Metrolinx tells us that with the Big Move fully implemented and fully funded, automobile trips in the GTA will go from 2.1 million to 2.6 million in the next 25 years. That’s a 25% increase. The Big Move is going to help us keep pace, hopefully, with the growth in population, but we need other tools as well in terms of goods movement infrastructure and obviously—let’s use the word—that means some road construction.

Nobody’s ever thinking about a massive 1960s type of highway program. Those days are gone. The money’s gone. The public will for that sort of thing is gone. We think there are strategic gaps in the network—key gaps—that need to be filled, and I’ll give you an example. The 427 north of Toronto comes to an end about five kilometres south of the CP intermodal terminal at Vaughan. That rail terminal handles about half a million freight

movements a year. The result that we have right now—and if we were out there right now, we'd be looking at a mess of traffic, hundreds of trucks exiting the 427 and then trying to make their way along arterial roads, left turns with these great big rigs, and it's creating an intolerable conflict with commuter traffic. So five kilometres of road would have a huge impact on traffic and safety northwest of the city. That's what I mean when I'm talking about strategic investments.

A larger project that would have a huge strategic impact is the Niagara-to-GTA, which is virtually dead, and the GTA-west project, which is somewhat less dead. In the case of the Niagara-to-GTA, a decision was made to continue widening the QEW and other 400 series highways instead of conducting a new redundant corridor that would connect the GTAH and points west with our largest trading partner. Without some redundancy in some of our major arteries, we run the continual risk of interruption and delays on our road system that many traffic experts—I'm referring to the QEW here. Many believe it's already overbuilt and we're widening it again. The decision to do that was made in spite of expert opinion within MTO that said such a route would be required sometime around 2031.

The real thing here is, we're never going to solve our gridlock problems if we can't engage in long-term planning. Part of the solution will involve creation of a dedicated transportation infrastructure funding envelope that will serve the needs of both the movement of people and goods. So, we support the Big Move, but the fact is that the funding tools for the Big Move will absorb much of the tax headroom that we think is left in the province.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 10 seconds left.

Mr. John Best: I think that's really my presentation, Mr. Chairman, other than to say that just as we must invest in transit, we mustn't lose sight of the need for continued investment in the goods movement infrastructure. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The government side.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Mr. Chair, I'm going to share my time with my colleague next to me. But the one question I had, John—and thank you for the presentation; it was interesting. I drive the QEW daily and anybody who says that it was under capacity, I'd be hard-pressed to get agreement from anybody I'm sitting next to in the morning. But that being said, I know that often I share the road with a lot of trucks. I know I've got to be here at 9 o'clock in the morning, and I often wonder—I think other people wonder—that the goods on those trucks that are travelling through Toronto at rush hour, if they really have to be somewhere at 9 o'clock in the morning? Do trucking companies ever plan their routes around peak periods, basically? Because you're talking about expanding the 427, which I think is a good idea. The problem is, when they get down from the 427 to the 401, it's turned into a parking lot. Often I, as a commuter, am sharing that parking lot with a huge number of trucks. Are your

members doing things like trying to run at night, trying to run in the evenings, that type of thing?

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Mr. John Best: Yes. There's a lot more night delivery going on. Some of it is just not possible, but certainly, the industry is very open to the idea of off-peak hours. What that does, of course, is that when you're making a delivery to a customer, it forces him or her to also have somebody there to receive the goods, so what you get into is adding employment costs at the receiving end. It's something that, certainly, Mr. Bradley from the OTA would tell you that they're very open to, and they're trying to implement it where they can. Some of those trucks, as was said earlier—in fact, I think you said it, Ms. Cansfield—are simply moving through the area. But yes, the industry is open to that.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: A very small question; all I need is a brief answer: Do you have a target you're aiming at? Are you trying to reduce your own truck use on the roads by 25%, by 50%? Is there any quantifiable target you're aiming at?

Mr. John Best: There's no real target, because we, of course, don't see goods movement as a problem. We see it as an enabler of the economy in Ontario, so we don't see ourselves as a problem to be erased. That's why we're so much in favour of the transit solution, because whatever takes cars or any kind of vehicle off the road will reduce congestion and—

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: What I meant was shifting to off-peak hours, not erasing truck traffic.

Mr. John Best: There's no formal strategy. Trucking companies are very organic. They do what they have to do to get it done.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you.

Mr. John Best: And when customers say, "Let's do it at night," they do it, but the problem is that there are depots that require—with just-in-time delivery, there is tremendous pressure on these truckers to be just in time.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you, John. Nice to see you.

Mr. John Best: Nice to see you again.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I'd like to talk a little bit about the intermodal and the issue around using the H₂O highway—that's part of the southern gateway initiative—because it really would get goods up to northern Ontario, not in the just-in-time, but certainly certain kinds of goods. There aren't as many truckers available to drive those big rigs as there were in the past, and you've got the issue of the congestion as well. That leads into looking at transportation congestion from a variety—from air, rail and ships as well as just dealing with congestion on the roads, more intermodal and looking at the hubs. I'd be interested in how you're progressing with that concept.

Mr. John Best: There has been some significant progress. ArcelorMittal, one of the largest users of the seaway already for raw materials—as you know, they're

now integrated with the company that has mills all through the United States.

Raw steel was barged across Lake Erie last year. They set up a short-sea shipping operation, and they did it not because they were being pressured; they did it because it made sense. Many of these transportation solutions on the goods-movement side, they take place because they make sense.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 30 seconds.

Mr. John Best: CP Rail—there's a train leaving the Milton area every night, loaded up with truck trailers going to Montreal, so every one of those rigs that's on that big, long train is taking a truck off the road. There are three or four of the biggest transport companies in Ontario currently using that as a relief system.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We'll now move to the official opposition.

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes, thank you very much for your very balanced approach and realizing, "It's the economy, stupid," really, basically—not you, but me. It really is about that. There would be nobody coming anywhere if there was no economy.

You talked about the importance of the options and the various modes with transportation, which is a very reasonable presentation. I liked the fact that you stated categorically that transit is not the only solution, because basically what all the chatter is about now is the transit option. Transit is important. I would say that; I'd 100% agree with that. I just came back from Hong Kong, three weeks there. I have a daughter who lives in Hong Kong. There's a smart card, and you can buy a newspaper or a coffee, pay for parking, and pay for the ferry or whatever else. That's a smart card. You reload it at the Mac's Milk. You understand? We've got this Presto argument going on; it's just absolutely hideous. And we're going to spend a lot more money on that stuff, building the integration of transit—that is, the TTC metro transit with Viva and all the other systems—the systems, which have this bureaucracy that says, "No." "Yes." "Our fare." "We don't bridge." Hazel's system, between her and Mel Lastman, like 10 years ago—do you follow me?

Mr. John Best: Yes.

Mr. John O'Toole: This discussion on the economy is very important. The multimodal—using our lakeshore, using the waterways across the lake etc.—is missing from this discussion on gridlock and the economy.

What they're looking for—and I'm going to ask that as a question here. What we really need are permanent funding tools. I bridged it modestly today about—

Mr. Mike Colle: So you're saying taxes.

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes. Well, these are funding tools and we need to have a conversation about this.

Mr. John Best: I've heard that expression before.

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes, but I'm just leaving it to you, then. And they're so vague or obsequious in terms

of delivering what this is about. There's no more revenue left in my pocket. I'm already taking GO. Do you understand? I'm not like Mr. Flynn; I can't afford the car anymore.

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: No, I can't afford it because they're going to tax it more.

I have a daughter who lives in London as well—England. They live in Seven Oaks, in Kent—a wonderful train ride right down beside Westminster. It works. It has taken about 100 years to do it. But you'd have to be rich to drive into London, and that's how it's going to be here. You're going to have to be rich, with a Bugatti or some kind of expensive vehicle, with a chauffeur, to get into Toronto.

Mr. John Best: Well, that truckload of televisions will still have to come into downtown Toronto—

Mr. John O'Toole: Exactly right.

Mr. John Best: —to drop them off at the condos.

Mr. John O'Toole: Where are they going to get this new revenue from? I'll just throw it back to you.

Mr. John Best: Somebody was asking what the public thinks about the revenue tools that were announced. I see the Star did a survey. The most popular one is a parking levy; although I think the guys at these shopping malls, when they find out they're going to be asked to pay as well—fuel tax, payroll tax, sales tax are all ranking in the 20% approval, and those are the ones that are going to raise the money that we need.

If I was a federal MP sitting here right now, I'd say we walked away from two points on the HST two years ago, or a few years ago, and perhaps the time to take that up would have been immediately. It's going to be a tough sell.

Mr. John O'Toole: They want to have dedicated revenue, and I kind of agree with that, if you can find out—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have one minute left.

Mr. John O'Toole: —where the revenue actually goes.

The parking was tried by the NDP government when they were in government. It was called a concentration tax, which was a tax—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: We got rid of it.

Mr. John O'Toole: But the point is, this is going to be an interesting discussion. The talk is important. I put to you that it is the economy.

I talked to Dave Bradley, from the Ontario Trucking Association. They're away at a conference right now. We need to have a serious discussion about this, because you're right, gridlock is a \$6-billion drag—that's what they're saying, anyway—and the whole cost of infrastructure, the \$50 billion, is new money. It's not current, moving-around money; it's new tax—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much.

Mr. John O'Toole: This is a significant problem.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I have to move to the next questioner, the third party.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you for your presentation. I have a couple of questions for you. My first question is, in addition to high-volume usage, would you say that regular road closures and slow traffic as a result of accidents and poor road maintenance, all of which drastically would reduce the profitability of transportation and people in the transportation business—would you say that those contribute to gridlock?

Mr. John Best: Absolutely. I mean, part of our challenge here—if we never build another lane of new road from here on, we have an enormous highway system that needs to be kept in a state of good repair. Nothing can get stretched more easily than infrastructure maintenance budgets. Municipalities are doing it. Absolutely. I mean, if a road is in such a state of repair that vehicles are either slowed or accidents are being caused—I'm not sure if you have a specific road in mind. Absolutely, it's a problem.

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Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you. In some areas of the province—in particular, I'm thinking of northern Ontario—there is only one route available. There are no other routes. Would you say that in order to prevent gridlock in northern Ontario, we would need to take steps to ensure that alternate routes are available, whether it's public transportation or the investment in roads?

Mr. John Best: Gridlock needs to be attacked wherever it is, but I think what you're going to find is that it's going to be prioritized against where the need is greatest, where the population is greatest, where the traffic patterns are greatest. I think that's kind of the pecking order that a project in northern Ontario, against perhaps a proposed project in southern Ontario, will face. I don't know how government allocates funding, but I presume it's a notional allocation based on population more than anything else.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I'm not sure if you're aware, but the Trans-Canada Highway, when it passes through northern Ontario, is the main highway that connects our country from end to end—

Mr. John Best: Highway 17, or—

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Yes, that's correct. It's only a single-lane highway. There are no other routes. What we have seen, time and time again, is that there are a number of road closures, especially in the winter months, as a result of poor road maintenance. It's dangerous for the transport drivers. There are a number of accidents that involve—unfortunately, there are fatalities. So I'm wondering if you think that this is adequate, this single lane, to meet our transportation needs, especially as it relates to the movement of goods.

Mr. John Best: Well, when I talk to truckers, they definitely will talk about—I mean, truckers don't like two-lane roads anywhere. The fact that we go through a large piece of Canada on a two-lane road is not an optimal situation. The question is, to make it a four-lane road over hundreds of miles is a hugely expensive prop-

osition. That funding has to sort of put itself in the queue with other funding.

The United States has a wonderful system of highways that run across sparsely populated areas, but I think we missed that boat 40 years ago.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: In your opinion, would it be appropriate to charge a road toll in those areas where they're serviced only by one road and it's not a matter of an alternate road providing a more express route?

Mr. John Best: I think that we have to look at new highway construction. I think we have to look at road tolls as a possible way of funding new highway construction.

Tolling an existing road, I think, is going to be very unacceptable to the public. Now, whether you could argue that taking a two-lane road and making it a four-lane road—if the toll was modest enough, you might be able to sell it. I don't know.

We certainly can't have toll roads that are charging the kind of tolls that are on the 407 ETR.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thirty seconds.

Mr. John Best: They would have to be competitive with something like the New York thruway, where the toll is low enough that it's still acceptable for goods movement.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: And do you have any suggestions of how we can raise the funds that are necessary to pay for roads?

Mr. John Best: I don't know. What is the government spending these days—\$120 million, roughly? And we're looking at \$1 billion, \$2 billion—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. I have to move on. Thank you very much for being here, and thank you very much for presenting.

Mr. John Best: Thank you.

CANADIAN AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The next deputant is the CAA. Elliott Silverstein? You have five minutes for a presentation, and then we'll resort to questions from each party, five minutes each.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and members of the standing committee. My name is Elliott Silverstein. I'm manager of government relations at CAA South Central Ontario.

Advocating on behalf of members since 1903, CAA is a not-for-profit auto club with 1.9 million members in our territory as far west as Windsor, north to Sault Ste. Marie, and east to Kingston.

Advocacy is at the origin of CAA, from lobbying for the construction of the Trans-Canada Highway, to introducing seat belts in all vehicles, and distracted-driving legislation.

Today we continue to advocate on behalf of members and the motoring public at all levels of government. But our members are not just motorists. They're cyclists, and they use public transportation systems, and they understand that the importance of an integrated transportation

system, regardless of the mode that one travels, is critical.

Ontario is consistently recognized for having safe roads, yet commuting times are rising, and it is anticipated those commutes will only increase. We know the challenges that face us: increased gridlock, the need for a regional and integrated transportation system, and the improvement of the conditions on our road network.

My comments today will touch on several points: dedicated funding, a balanced transportation network, intelligent transportation systems, the balance between business and consumers when it comes to revenue generation, and regional solutions.

There's little argument that solutions are needed. CAA has repeatedly advocated for improved road infrastructure across the province, an issue illustrated each year in our Worst Roads campaign.

CAA has also shown its support for the expansion of road networks; for example, supporting the extension of the 427 north to help alleviate congestion issues in the Brampton and Vaughan areas.

From a transit perspective, CAA is excited at the TTC expansion into York region, providing greater access and alternatives for countless 905 commuters.

The GTHA is in need of an integrated and regional transportation network. With Metrolinx soon releasing its recommendations, it is imperative that any funding for the Big Move is not only dedicated, but there is a fair balance to ensure that consumers are not disproportionately charged through any revenue streams.

One subject not emphasized heavily in the Big Move is cycling. CAA has been active with cycling through its Watch for Bikes program, along with its Bike Assist services and an ongoing working relationship with Share the Road Cycling Coalition. With numerous municipalities investigating and incorporating cycling infrastructure, it is a critical element of a balanced transportation plan.

CAA is concerned with the prospects of a second gas tax levied on gas and diesel sales to pay for road or transit infrastructure for a number of reasons. First, the gas tax is not dedicated to infrastructure initiatives right now, and it is difficult to accept prospects of an additional levy when the government has yet to earmark these funds to road infrastructure improvements. Secondly, the way the gas tax is structured today, the HST is applied on the price of gasoline. That includes the 14.7-cent-a-litre fuel tax. As a result, motorists are in essence paying a tax on a tax.

CAA's position on dedicated funding is long-standing. Two years ago, we urged the province to direct a portion of revenue generated from the HST charged on gasoline and diesel sales to a predictable funding mechanism. We recently conducted a survey with nearly 5,000 members, and the results were conclusive: 72% of respondents agree that the source of funds for new and expanded transportation should be shared among businesses and consumers. Similarly, 88% of respondents said any new money generated and collected for transportation should be dedicated to infrastructure projects. There is a distinct

lack of dedicated funding, something that is critical and overdue for transportation projects, especially with the announced need for \$2 billion over the next 25 years to pay for the Big Move.

It's critical that this issue not be examined solely at a macro level. For consumers across the region, addressing the impact of this conversation must be done at a micro level. The one question not asked enough is, what will the cost be to consumers? It appears that consumers are going to be asked to pay in a number of ways. Methods recommended by Metrolinx in late May could include HST applied to existing and potential fuel taxes, and businesses downloading costs onto consumers.

CAA's concern is that the approximate cost per consumer could be around \$1,000 annually. That's a significant amount of money for individuals who may not receive salary increases equal to or greater than that amount each year.

Here's a quick analysis of some of the options suggested. For example, a regional sales tax of 1% could cost a household around \$600 annually. A high-occupancy toll lane, which is a voluntary choice by individuals, at 30 cents a kilometre, is something that one could choose to opt in or opt out of. A parking levy of \$1 per day could be conceivably offset on consumers by businesses. Lastly, a fuel tax of 10 cents a litre on a 60-litre tank, filling up each week, could cost a consumer about \$312 annually.

While CAA recognizes that consumers—drivers included—will need to pay to help fund Big Move projects, it is critical that a disproportionate burden not be put on consumers.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have a minute left.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Thank you.

Ontario has consistently been recognized as having some of the safest roads in North America. While Ontario serves as an excellent model for other jurisdictions to follow, the province does seem to be plagued by gridlock and challenges in some key sectors.

Traffic congestion has reached critical proportions. It is vital that we improve our transportation infrastructure to meet escalating demand. In addition, the daily commute is stressful. Gridlock is hurting our health, family well-being and productivity. Improved mobility and decreased congestion benefit us all, yet finding a balance to not only disproportionately charge the consumer is also critical.

Establishing a dedicated fund now is not only a gesture of goodwill, but it provides an element of public confidence that once revenue tools are determined, the money collected would be earmarked into a specific account.

Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We'll go to questions. The official opposition.

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Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you very much for the presentation. My colleague Jack will probably share a couple of minutes here, too.

I like to tell people in my riding when they complain about the price of gas, which is always a chronic issue, that when they implemented the HST in Ontario, that cost 10 cents a litre. The price of gas went up 10 cents a litre because of HST—that one move. Now it's my understanding they get about \$2 billion to \$3 billion in revenue from the HST. This is new revenue on things that prior to that were not taxed as a consumption tax. What's your response? Because I know that the CAA did a lot of work on that. I'll just leave on that note.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: I don't have specifics in terms of what the actual generation of revenue has been since July 1, 2010, but certainly, you're right. With the HST being included, new revenue has come in and it's a new source of revenue and one that could have been allocated early on. We called on the government to do it at that time. That said, it's never too late.

We think that if gas taxes are under consideration—twofold: Number one, a tax on a tax, so you're collecting tax on the application of another tax, but also let's make sure that it's going back into the area that it was collected from. If it is coming from gasoline, then it should be put back into roads and transit infrastructure. So we believe that if gas prices are going to be at this rate, it should be going back into it so it's a net positive.

Mr. John O'Toole: Would you forecast that would be dedicated revenue to the transit challenges—\$50 billion to \$80 billion of new revenues required for these solutions?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Certainly an additional gas tax is something that CAA is looking at. I'm not in any way saying that we endorse that particular item, but any revenue that is collected should go back dedicated—that it's not going to general revenues.

Mr. John O'Toole: Okay. Jack?

Mr. Jack MacLaren: My question is, more money is needed, and the government doesn't have more money. Would you be supportive of the idea of private sector money coming into play for things like—well, everything that Toronto needs: subways, trains, highways—as well as where there's a need for highways across southern Ontario for automobile traffic in general, if it was an appropriate thing to do? And it is an appropriate thing to do because of that money shortage—which would result, of course, in toll highways and toll everything, I guess. Could you comment on that?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Sure. In terms of a P3 structure when it comes to public transportation, I think that right now as we're looking at the various ways to pay for things, all items should be on the table for discussion and consideration.

When it comes to highways and roads, I think that the biggest item from our perspective is that there needs to be consumer choice. If you're going to be putting in road tolls in a particular area on new infrastructure, there should be an alternative for people to drive so if they choose not to pay for it, they have an alternative means to get from point A to point B efficiently and safely.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: But in certain cases where there is an absolute need, say, for a road or a highway, and the money isn't there to build it, and the only way to have it would be to have a toll highway built by the private sector, would that not be better than no highway at all?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Well, again, it's something that's worth considering. As I said, right now there are a lot of discussions, and we want to try and see how there's a balance between businesses and consumers. Looking at alternative sources through P3s is something that I don't think should be taken off the table. That said, I think that each individual situation is unique and I think that we have to look at what the options are in those particular areas because if it's a situation where you're essentially putting in a toll where there's no other options, it could be something that could be considered punitive because there are no alternatives for those consumers.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Well, it would be punitive if there was no road as well.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: In theory, yes, but one would also suggest that at this point there probably is an option to get from those areas right now. Again, our position has remained that not only is it looking at new roads but it's also maintaining and enhancing the roads that we have right now. That's the other discussion that sometimes is forgotten in this entire dialogue: that we have roads that are in need of urgent repair across the province.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. We'll move to the third party.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you for your presentation. I wanted to ask you some of the questions that I've asked some other presenters. First, I wanted to start off with your definition of "gridlock." I'm wondering if your definition of gridlock includes fairly regular road closures, slow traffic as a result of accidents and poor road maintenance.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: I think those are all catalysts to some of the problems of gridlock. I think gridlock is really the situation you face each and every day where there's slow movement in a particular area. Road closures certainly contribute to it, as do accidents. The hope is that accidents are cleared up safely and in a reasonable amount of time. Poor road conditions I think obviously in certain types of weather can inhibit that. Unfortunately, that's a necessary evil. If there's snow coming down, you're going to be stuck a little bit longer. If snow is not being cleared, it becomes more of a chronic problem. Certainly, I think those are challenges that we face sometimes. An accident is something that we cannot prevent, in the sense that if a collision happens and you're stuck behind that situation, you are going to be stuck there for a short period of time.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: In your view, is a single-lane highway along the Trans-Canada adequate to meet our transportation needs and to accommodate both business and personal use?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: I think it depends on the areas themselves. I think some areas require larger roads, four-lane roads. Some smaller areas would require two lanes.

I'm not sure which particular area you're referring to, but certainly I think that if the needs require an expansion, right now, with the roads being relatively safe in the province of Ontario, if there's a need, there certainly should be an investigation to assess if that needs to go from two to four.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: In one of your previous answers, you talked about the need for choice when it comes to toll roads and the fact that there should be an alternative way to get from point A to B safely. I have some questions particularly relating to northwestern Ontario, where Highway 17 is a single highway—there are no other alternatives—spanning probably about 500 kilometres. In that particular instance where there is an existing road—we're not talking about a new road—and this is the only option, in your opinion would it be appropriate to charge a road toll in that area?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: If it were to be contained as a two-lane road, I would suggest that our position would be that it should continue to be structured the way it is. If there was a desire to go to a four-lane road, potentially you could have a high-occupancy toll lane, much like they're considering through some of the proposals where you have a premium lane and you have a standard lane, where if you are driving as a single driver, you would be able to pay an additional portion for that additional service. Again, I'm not familiar with the particular area you're referring to, but certainly if it's a two-lane road and you're going to be tolling existing infrastructure with no alternative, it certainly is less favourable to the consumer than some of the other options that are being presented.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Right, because people would essentially have no other option, if they were getting to and from work, than to pay a particular toll. This is sometimes people leaving their homes to get groceries, just the basic necessities of life, and there are no other options like public transportation. In a case like that, would you be supportive of a toll?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: In those situations, certainly, a toll should be one of the last options. I think right now what you're looking at is, if there is a high-occupancy toll lane, it's where there is consumer choice. If we're looking at putting in road tolls, it should be on new infrastructure, not on existing infrastructure, for the time being, because we do have a gridlock issue. And if we're going to start tolling areas where the situation could become problematic because you may have—by putting in certain tools, revenue sources, it could actually do the opposite of what you're trying to achieve.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. We'll move to the government side. Mrs. Cansfield.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I want to ask a couple of questions about your polling. Can you tell me how many people were polled, your margin of error and your distribution of the polling?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: The polling that we've included in our presentation here was conducted through CAA members. It was conducted with just under 5,000 members; I believe 4,940, if I'm to be exact. I believe the margin of error was standard, about 3%. It was conducted in December 2012. I'm not sure if there was another question you asked as part of that.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: No, that's great. The reason I was asking that question was, if it's all your members, it's across the province.

It's just interesting: Your conclusion states that traffic congestion has reached critical proportions. I think we've heard that from a number of folks. But if you go to the time spent commuting on weekdays, "About how much time do you spend commuting on a typical weekday?" 55% do a 30-minute commute. If you go to the amount of change in commuting time, it indicates that 42% say that increased, but that also means that 48% plus another 9% said that it had not increased, that it had remained the same, decreased a little or decreased a lot, with 4%. Then your last question, which is on page 10, "Do you think that introducing more road tolls on highways would make a major difference, minor difference or no real difference in reducing road congestion in Canada's major cities?" Interestingly, 39% said no real difference, 41% said a minor difference, so if you put those together, that's significant that people say that even if you put a toll in and more infrastructure, it's still going to be congested. So, then, my question to you is, if that's the case, what's the answer?

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Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Unfortunately—if I had the answer, I'd be passing it on to everybody that I know right now. But to be perfectly honest, I think part of the answer here is that when it is polled in a greater area, it helps provide insight in some areas that may have more or less gridlock issues, but also it's an indication that—you know, people know about the 407, and it's an express toll highway. It provides relative ease. If you were to put a toll road on some of the existing 400 series of highways, there is no guarantee that it's going to reduce your commute time in any significant way. It's not going to guarantee that in any way. If anything, if you were to put that on there, it may push people on to arterial roads.

At the end of the day, people may realize that it's not going to be same as a 407 and that it would actually be something more that you're paying for but not actually carving off any time from your actual commute. So that could be, in part, some of the answer if I were to look at that from that perspective.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Maybe, then, the question, if you have an opportunity to do the survey again, is additional or new roads—would that make a difference in commuting and would it make a major difference in road congestion, and would you pay something if it were on and dedicated to a new road as opposed to what I presume they think is an existing road and a toll on that road. I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you, Elliott, for being here today. Thanks for the presentation.

The CAA, I think, has long been looked at as an honest broker, as a very strong advocate for the motoring public, so let me say from the outset that I think it's excellent to see you putting forward the idea of a partnership with the cycling community, that we need to pay attention to cycling, because perhaps that partnership didn't exist in the past, and it should exist in the future. That, I think, is really positive.

Now, for a long time, your organization has been a strong advocate for having this discussion. I think you could probably look at all three parties as having ignored you in the past when you've asked those questions, that a discussion take place. And this Premier now, the new Premier, is saying we need to have this discussion and is not letting people back away from the problem the way that other governments have in the past and other parties have in the past. How does the CAA keep this momentum going? There seems to be an interest. It's got a profile it didn't have before as an issue. How does the CAA keep that going?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: From our perspective, what we're doing right now is really focusing on having the conversations with government, with stakeholders and the general public, with our members.

I think a lot of the discussion right now, as I mentioned in my presentation, is that it's a very macro discussion, \$2 billion every year, but I think the discussion really needs to be turning to the households across Ontario, across the GTHA, and saying, "What is it going to cost me, and what do I need to understand about what the future costs are going to be?" I think CAA has a definite opportunity to really provide that type of context to its members and provide that type of information to government and express what some of our members are saying, because at the end of the day, these are the individuals who are going to be opening up their wallets and paying, potentially, for various revenue sources, whatever Metrolinx determines, and move forward from there.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: So you see yourself as a partner in this process?

Mr. Elliott Silverstein: I think we are a strong advocate that certainly can help provide information and hopefully provide some solutions and communication to our members and to the general public.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I would agree with that. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We have to end the questioning here. Thank you very much.

CHIPTAG

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We'll move to our next presenter: ChipTag, Abdul Haseeb Awan. You have five minutes to present and then we go to questions, five minutes from each party—and if you could introduce your guest.

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: Hello. I'm Abdul Haseeb from Ottawa, Ontario.

The Vice-Chair (Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield): Thank you very much. Please continue.

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: I'm Abdul from Ottawa, Ontario, and this is my partner, Saif. We are from a start-up called ChipTag, and we are addressing the most common problem with parking, because 94% of the time the car is parked. What we are trying to address is how people can spend more time on the road.

I'd just like to address and tell you a couple of numbers, because numbers speak louder than words. The number is, there's much less traffic congestion on highways than downtown, and up to 74% of the traffic in downtown is due to people searching for parking; or when they park, they have to go to a machine, take a ticket, come back, keep the ticket, go back and do whatever they have to, which takes up to four to five minutes for every car to be parked. So what we have suggested is that we should have a sensor-based technology that can automatically pay for parking, which will reduce the operational costs for the city of Toronto and the city of Ottawa to operate—and, obviously, spending five minutes less for every car on the street and off the street.

Talking about the numbers, as I said, up to 74% of the traffic in downtown is for parking, and every car spends up to one mile every day just searching for parking. So what do we do? We have developed some sensors that go on the car, and they go on the street too, so people can know where the traffic is heading towards, and you don't have to walk to a machine to pay for your parking. All the process that takes up to four to five minutes is reduced to 15 seconds. You don't have to look around for parking; you can go on your mobile. And the city of Toronto can get all the statistics of where the parking habits are going. That's all what we do.

Just to introduce how our sensors are, they're this tiny. They can go on any car, and it costs very less money to deploy. And the best part about it is, the city doesn't need to invest any money in it. It would be an all-private-based project that could go into existing parking spots. We guarantee you a saving of at least 1% every year on the parking spots. There are around 17,000 parking spots in Toronto. Multiply that calculation, and that can go into all the city of Toronto's operational costs.

That's pretty much what we have to say about what we do and how we can improve the parking system.

A few other numbers: 90 minutes are spent on parking on checkout. When you go into parking downtown, you have to park in underground parking. You spend 90 seconds on parking. Four minutes are spent on paying by machine. Three minutes are spent on paying by phone. Four minutes extra are spent for street parking. Now, multiply all those numbers by the amount of cars on the street, and you get your number.

Congestion: Interestingly, if you reduce the number of cars by 10%, you reduce the congestion by 25%. So it's like an exponential increase in whatever we do.

There are other sources that we can do in order to reduce congestion. We can have a very high mass public transit, or we can build new roads. We can introduce congestion pricing, like in London. We can do a lot of stuff. We can increase the parking costs by double so people are afraid to—but all those numbers add up, and overall there's a decline in economy for introducing all those things. And it requires a lot of educating.

So my question here and my appeal to all of this is, if the public sector is willing to contribute and bring in, and we can show that we can reduce operational costs by numbers and by demoing, that should be applied. That's all.

The Vice-Chair (Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield): Thank you very much. Let's start the questioning with the NDP.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Abdul, you don't have anything written; correct?

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: No.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Have you made presentations before to different groups or municipalities, or is this the first time?

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Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: I have done them.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But you never distribute any paper—

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: No. They asked us if we want to, or if you don't want to—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I see.

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: It was supposed to be a teleconference before.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes. I recommend that it's useful to do that, by the way.

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: Okay.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Let me understand: This chip, it helps to reduce the amount of time that one takes to find parking?

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: It tells you where the parking is, and it tells you to pay and it reduces the time to pay for parking.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So it tells you where, and what's the second part?

Mr. Saif Altimimi: I'll just walk you through the actual product itself.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You can speak through this mike here. It'll be a lot easier. And give us your name because they need to know your name.

Mr. Saif Altimimi: Yes. My name is Saif Altimimi. So, the way that it works is, basically it's a little chip you put in your car. It's an RFID chip. You go to the toll, it would automatically open up, and then when you go to the parking lot, the timer will start. So let's say you're there for two hours, the charge will come to two hours; your credit card will be attached to the actual chip beforehand.

What we're doing is, we're deploying the software to private parking currently where they have their own cloud-based software. They can actually determine who's coming in, who's coming out, and payments are automatic. So there's no more coming out, getting a ticket,

you know, putting it back in there. That's a waste of time, and our solution is, we're saving parkers time and, therefore, saving the city—congestion time will be reduced because of this solution.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Right. So let me ask you, have you gone to private sector people? Have you gone to any city anywhere to—

Mr. Saif Altimimi: Yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: What do they tell you?

Mr. Saif Altimimi: Currently we have three lots in Ottawa that are deploying the software. Right now, we're in beta, so our first version of the software—the iteration of our product is being deployed at these three lots over the next three or four months. That's the current stage we're at right now.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And those three lots, are they privately owned or are they city—

Mr. Saif Altimimi: Privately owned, currently.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Have you gone to any city to discuss this idea with them or—

Mr. Saif Altimimi: Not currently, no. We're looking for feedback, you know, advisers to help us get into the city, but right now it's really—we're focusing on the private sector currently, but we find our solution to be really beneficial as a city-wide solution. I mean, there's a lot of wasted time when it comes to parking, and ChipTag can really solve this issue for both the parkers, private parking, and also the city itself.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It seems like a very interesting idea to pursue. This is not the committee for it, I don't think, but it was good to hear about your idea. I think cities might be interested, but I don't really know how they deal with that. But if there's a way to save people's time and cut down on how much people have to drive around and waste gas to do that, it seems like something that they might want to consider.

Good luck.

The Vice-Chair (Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield): Do you have any additional questions?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thanks for the presentation. It was interesting. Is there a scalability to the project? Do you need a minimum population? Does it only work in a centre like the city of Toronto or can it work in a community where the population is about 200,000? The parking demand obviously is a lot less, but there still is a parking demand.

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: Oh, it can work from 50 spots to anywhere we want. So we can easily deploy it to a population of 200,000 people. Since we are all bootstrapped—like we have been part of a couple of start-ups, so it's all our money—we are deploying it at small locations so we can test it out and make it rock solid. But it can be deployed anywhere.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Okay, because I'm thinking what I'd like you to do is make this presentation to the mayor of my community—

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: Sure.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: —and see what he thinks about the whole thing, because obviously I think Mr.

Marchese is right. It's not a decision for this committee, but it certainly is of interest to me and—I don't know—I would imagine the city of Toronto. But the least I can do as a member, if you get this information to me personally, I'll make sure it gets into the right hands in my community of Oakville.

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: Sure.

The Vice-Chair (Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield): Thank you very much. Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you very much. Two innovative young fellows, and I commend you. I think it's a very important idea. I can see it on my iPod—well, my BlackBerry—as an app. I'm going into Toronto to the Hummingbird Centre and it'll tell me where to park. Its time is almost here and passed, if you will. But more importantly, it's a transponder. Is this similar to the technology on the 407?

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: Very much similar to that technology.

Mr. Saif Altimimi: Yes—

Mr. John O'Toole: Exactly.

Mr. Saif Altimimi: E-ZPass for parking—

Mr. John O'Toole: So having a systems background for 20 years, I can see it. Now, what the future of this really is, there's going to be a tax called VMT. If you're reading anything on this thing, it's going to be vehicle miles travelled. That's what it's going to be. That's what they're going to end up with and so—

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: No, it's the answer, if you're reading any of the material on this. And this transponder would be very helpful. You may be on a gold mine here. If I left from Durham, it's vehicle miles travelled, and they could set rates, like a smart meter at your house for electricity. If you leave at 5 in the morning, it's two cents. If you leave at 7 in the morning, where it's really busy, it's 10 cents. That's where we're going. It's just not there yet, and we're all talking around these new tools—we're having a conversation on it.

But I commend you. I think it's important to—perhaps a more fulsome printed idea, without giving up your patent information, on the software side. I think you're on to something.

In London, England, they have a similar system. You get billed the day you drive into London. It's at your house, and if you don't pay it, you get fined. They link it to your credit card, and it automatically pays the £35 to drive into London. That's a nice bit of change.

The only way you can get into London now is if you're in a Rolls-Royce, basically. If you're not rich, you're not going. You're taking transit. That's what Toronto is going to have to do, because there's going to be no place to move. Pedestrian-friendly, cycle-friendly—and slow-moving vehicles will be allowed.

We're just chattering now. Good idea; I commend you.

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: The best part about the 407—we manufacture hardware and software in Canada, so we have reduced the pricing deployment cost to a very

low cost. As I said, we can bootstrap and deploy it in one of the cities by our own cash, which means that city doesn't have to spend any money. We can tell you the number beforehand: "This is the number that you will be saving, in terms of transactions."

Mr. John O'Toole: If you could tie this into intelligent transportation systems, ITS, you could actually manage what roads you're able to tack on, and if the road is really busy, you can manipulate the fees and the whole deal. You're on to something that's going to be part of the future solution of—now, if you want to favour commercial traffic—like, we have HOV lanes. What they should do is tax HOV lanes. Let single persons use those lanes. You pay a bit more for the licence you get.

These are the innovations that have to come forward. Doing the same things we've been doing for the last 30 years doesn't work. Yours is the first fresh idea I've heard today.

Mr. Abdul Haseeb Awan: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield): Thank you very much for your presentation. I believe, Mr. Flynn, you're going to give this young man your business card?

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Absolutely. If you'll contact me—

Mr. Saif Altimimi: Hopefully, we'll do that, yes. That would be wonderful. Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Here's my card, if you'd like.

Mr. Saif Altimimi: Sure. Thank you.

SWEENEY STERLING FINLAYSON AND CO.
ARCHITECTS INC.

The Vice-Chair (Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield): Next is Carl Madsen, director of Sweeny Sterling Finlayson and Co. Architects Inc. Good afternoon, Mr. Madsen. You have five minutes for presentation, and then we'll do a rotation, sir.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Good afternoon. It's a pleasure to be here today, honourable members.

I think I'm here to move your attention. This is probably one of the most successful countries or provinces in the world, producing cars and highways and flying airplanes and doing things in technology—BlackBerry and all this. Congratulations.

This success means congestion, so congestion, I guess, is a good thing. I'm not teaching you a new thing. But I think this success belongs to past times and past generations. I'm speaking on behalf of the younger generation, you could say, from zero to 50. You'll maybe say from zero to 40.

The congestion solutions we are doing and fixing and ordering and helping on today may not really benefit that generation that much. It will benefit them. Nobody is opposing all the brilliant solutions being discussed here. I can hear it's all brilliant. I remind you, you're very successful. This legislation here is very successful. But it doesn't really apply to a new generation.

What is it that the new generation wants? I remind you of what you have in your pocket: small things. I'll just remind you that we started with big phones, then we had this size of phone, now we have this size and we will even go to smaller.

Probably there will be some sort of smaller vehicles than what we call a car today. These vehicles might be the ones which will be able to do inter-modular things for the future. If you think 50 years ahead and say, "The first 10 years, we will do all these improvements," whichever one of the ones we are talking about today, "but 50 years from now we still want our young generation, the ones who are 10 years old today, to grab this province, make it their own, build their own infrastructure, build their own vehicles and their own future," if you say it in a different way, if you start—and I'll show you with my hands—100 years ago and said, "We went"—in principle; it doesn't matter. Like the years are not right, but we had maybe trains and we had horseback and eventually the car, then we got to flying, planes. We have to do a new big step for the next 50 years, and that is up to you.

1700

What you can do is, you can legislate to allow smaller vehicles to be developed from young, new creative people. I'm not saying what it is because that's a discussion outside this meeting, but allow these to happen and they may be able to grab into our province or our suburban way of life, into our high-rise ways of transportation. It may go and compete with the way we are using the malls. It may grab into even northern Ontario, how we are moving around on lakes. It could be small electrical vehicles that make less noise, less pollution.

How much more time do I have?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You still have two minutes. Keep on.

Mr. Carl Madsen: I think I'm here today to make a call. I've been debating how I should talk to you. I've worked on this for 35 years, and I'm not going to sum it up, but I think the call I'm doing is to the standing committee to open up this province for the new generation to come. That's it.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): That's it? Okay, we'll go to questions, and it's the government.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you for the presentation. You raised the point that when you look at our transportation system that we have today, it hasn't been impacted by technology the way that the rest of our life has. We used to travel in the last century on horses, on trails, and now I guess we've moved to motorized vehicles on roads, but we haven't gone, really, much beyond that, have we? It's very much that we don't have a smart-grid system. We still control our own vehicles and we still travel in pretty heavy, independent vehicles that spew out what some people would say would be an old form of technology.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Yes.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: What sort of opportunities do we have, do you think, to let technology assist us in building—I guess I don't want to build the world's best

typewriter because we don't use typewriters anymore. You kind of want to move ahead from that. You want to move ahead. Is the transportation system we're trying to redevelop the transportation system of the future or not?

Mr. Carl Madsen: I think that congestion—let me just say something completely different. This is not directly answering you. Congestion is a good thing. It's a sign of success. The transportation system we have is what we wanted. We want cars, we want trucks, we want airplanes. We have all that, and we have filled the roads. We are using them with their congestion. We are using them—they're not empty.

In the future, we have to be able to mingle more. We are not trying to transport a family of four from A to B on a picnic. We are individuals in small zones, living in small climate bubbles, moving from A to B. So the challenge is actually how to—and particularly in the Ontario climate where we have very cold winters and very hot summers, so basically all year long we want to be in a climate-controlled zone called a vehicle or whatever, house. But what we have to look at is that we want to move ourselves and goods in a whole bunch of modes, from planes to trains, from trains to smaller vehicles and so on and so forth. The integration of that is key. If you are capable of doing that integration the same way as the Germans have with DIN, the Deutsches Institut für Normung, because everybody is following—not all over the world but on a big scale. Ontario is a driver of car production and many pieces of production. If we want to take leadership, we just go ahead and legislate that the door into the train and into the airplane for the cargo, the door into houses, the size of the elevator, is integrated in smaller units and we start to do a system of how we do in inter-modular things, and start to think about how to do that.

What that will do is change the whole infrastructure of the country and the generation of people working on this 10 to 20 years from now maybe would be market leaders world-wide on this, if you want to do this.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Very good, thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The opposition, Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes, thank you very much. I found your innovative approach to this quite futuristic and imaginative as an architect and well educated. I could see the future. I was at a conference this past week in Durham sponsored by a group of universities. It was looking at work in 2030. It was professors from Trent, Queen's, the University of Toronto and UOIT. They were talking about live/work, quality of life—kind of the stuff you're talking about. The question really raised is, why would somebody in 20, or even 10 years, working in banking or law be going downtown in Toronto? What on earth would they do that for? It came to the conclusion that it was basically for socialization and corporate culturalization, because it's all online. If you want to know what's the discussion today about the RBC issue, almost all of the IT support now is in Bangalore. If you really want to know the future you have to look at the

books called *The World Is Flat, and Hot, Flat and Crowded*, by Friedman. Take a look at his work.

The reason I'm putting this on the record is that that's the zone you're in. What's going to be done here in Ontario is what's actually done here. Because of digitalization, radiology, architecture and accounting, all that can be done in India. You know today that's what's happening. They send them a file with the building code for Toronto and, boom, they do all the drawings and you guys have to develop building codes and things.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Right.

Mr. John O'Toole: This is the future. I can't see the world of work being as it was. I don't see one transport barreling the highway trying to catch another one. They should all have a RFI signal. They come into Toronto, they go into a zone, they all have the signal and they're just one big train.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Right.

Mr. John O'Toole: Like, what we're doing today is not the way it's going to happen in the future, period. We're going to spend zillions of dollars on transit—that's assuming someone is going to the Blue Jays' game, if they ever win of these or something.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Right.

Mr. John O'Toole: So I'm interested in some of your creative thinking. Just respond to that if you will. You know?

Mr. Carl Madsen: Yes, I will respond. I think that what you guys can do for us—and it's completely free—is to legislate, and do it right. All you have to do is to open up the roads for smaller vehicles, open up the roads for small, creative businesses who want to draw, design and build small, new, interesting vehicles. And do you know—

Mr. John O'Toole: Have you heard of the ZENN car?

Mr. Carl Madsen: Sorry, do you know how many people you have brought to this country, to this province full of ideas and hyper-educated? Do you know how many? Hundreds of thousands, and they need new things to do. These cars we are building now, and these trains we are building now, they're not really futuristic; they are of the day. So if we want to be on the forefront, we should go ahead and do that.

By the way, I worked on the General Motors climatic wind tunnel in UOIT.

1710

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes—oh, you did?

Mr. Carl Madsen: And I worked with General Motors in Detroit on this. For me, to see you guys supporting this—I think it's great, but it's not the future. As you say, we will not drive 100 kilometres per hour. We don't need that. We are driving 8 kilometres per hour in this traffic. We don't need a wind tunnel because the wind effect is nothing at that speed. But we are building, for \$100 million, a facility like that. It's not paid for by the province, all of it, but it's supported, at least mentally, by you. I think that what we have to do is we have to spread out and let the creativity come in.

I actually talked to the president of UOIT about 10 years ago—

Mr. John O'Toole: Tim McTiernan, yes.

Mr. Carl Madsen: It was another gentleman at the time—and told him that UOIT, which is a technologic university producing engineers producing cars, and even—

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You've got 30 seconds.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Ten seconds?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thirty seconds to finish his answer.

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes. Are you familiar with the ZENN car being built in Quebec?

Mr. Carl Madsen: Slightly, yes, I am.

Mr. John O'Toole: Zero emissions, no gas.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Right. I worked on cars like this in Denmark 20 years ago.

Mr. John O'Toole: It's not permitted in Ontario.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Right. We should permit it. We should permit driving and using interesting vehicles in Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We'll move to the third party.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Carl. Can I ask you: There are small cars on the market. Are you saying some of the smaller cars that are available are not good for the Ontario climate, that they don't have enough options for smaller cars? Is that what you're saying?

Mr. Carl Madsen: Yes. They are not small enough. They weigh several hundred kilos. Today, you can buy a vehicle for a heavy lady which is about 20 kilos called a wheelchair. It's very small. She will be transported from A to B finely with a small battery. These cars are of an ancient time.

I love Mercedes-Benz; don't get me wrong. I love smart cars; don't get me wrong, no. I'm just saying we have a ways to go. There's a lot more to be done. And if Ontario is not doing it, I can guarantee you somebody's going to do it. I just don't know who it's going to be.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So a car like the 500, the Fiat car, that's too big?

Mr. Carl Madsen: Yes. Think smaller.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You're looking at something that has, what, two seats? A two-seater kind of car?

Mr. Carl Madsen: No, no, I'm not an inventor. I can come with proposals, but I'm not going to hit anywhere close near where we're going to go in the future.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But your point is that Ontario—and by the way, legislating is going to be very difficult in a capitalist market because a lot of people simply think that people ought to have the choice; and there are a lot of cultural things surrounding it, there are a lot of issues of whether you desire a little bigger car, and “Maybe I might not be able to fit into that” kind of attitude. There will be a lot of different questions that would arise out of it. But you're saying, if we want to lead this, governments should find a way to either give

incentives and/or to legislate the creation of small cars here in Ontario.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Yes. And you know if you go small, we can have smaller roads. If they are way smaller, the roads would be way smaller, so we don't have to maintain so much. We can get more tax revenue because we can decrease the roads.

When we build now, we are building 400, 500 square feet of basement, a full-height basement, for every unit to place a car, which is way too big—nobody cares—and we are driving these big trucks out of the city every day. And this is not only Ontario doing that. You know that that's China, everywhere. We're doing that everywhere.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So, Carl, who is doing it in the world?

Mr. Carl Madsen: Here's the thing: I think the Asians will develop and think about doing cars and smaller units better than we do it, and they will produce it faster, but I think, actually, we have the comprehension to make it happen. Our cities are still small enough to make it happen, because if you look at Germany or Switzerland, successful countries, they have smaller cities than we have. Instead of building a big new New York here, we build Oshawa, Hamilton, you know, some sort of groups, like at London—that is exactly that sort of stuff. Between there, we leave some green lands with some food production, so that it's not too expensive to produce food and bring it to people.

Then we isolate the development and create smaller municipalities with their own ideas and their own power, and they compete. The city is going to compete, if you think that way. Then when we go to the smaller vehicles—right now, you cannot build a garage as part of your house. Why? There's fuel there, right? If you go to another sort of fuel—I'm not saying it should be hydrogen; it's worse. But with electricity or whatever, the car can drive right into your—it has seats already. You can use it as your dining room. And it probably has a TV already; you don't have to buy a TV. It's your house. You're driving around—I'm not telling you how the future is going to look—no, sorry; cut what I just said—but I'm just saying we have a way to go. It will change the way we are building and our whole building code.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I have to move on. Thank you very much. Thank you for coming out.

Mr. Carl Madsen: Thank you.

GREATER TORONTO CIVICACTION ALLIANCE

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will move to our next presenter: from the Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance, Mitzie Hunter. Welcome. You have five minutes to present, and then we'll get into questions, five minutes from each party.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Okay, thank you. We have a letter that's being circulated.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Yes. Go ahead.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Thank you very much for allowing me the opportunity to appear before you. I just want to say, on behalf of my chair, John Tory, that he would have preferred to be here in person; however, he is unable to do that. He's currently on the air right now, so he has signed a letter and submitted it instead.

I will cover the full remarks that we have from CivicAction. For the past 10 years, CivicAction has brought together senior leaders—actually, both rising leaders and established leaders—from all sectors to tackle our region's toughest challenges, and those are social, economic and environmental challenges of the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

CivicAction sets a non-partisan agenda. We build strategic partnerships and we launch campaigns and programs, as well as organizations that transform our region. Accelerating the region's transportation is the number one priority for CivicAction at this time.

In 2011, we hosted our last regional summit, where we brought together 1,000 leaders for two days to talk about what are the top issues for the region. Whether we were talking about arts and culture or the environment or neighbourhoods or the economy, in all of those sessions transportation was the cross-cutting issue. Our board and our steering committee prioritized that as the issue to solve, and we have been working on that since the launch of our campaign.

Our transportation system is behind, and this primitive system is affecting all of us. It touches all of our lives. Whether it's a resident, an employer, an employee, a goods mover, a service provider or a consumer, we're all impacted by our limited transportation options each and every day. Congestion drains our economy by \$6 billion per year, and that number will increase to \$15 billion over the next 25 years as our region's population continues to grow by approximately 100,000 people each year.

Through CivicAction's Your 32 campaign at your32.com, CivicAction and its 45-member champions council of senior civic leaders from across all sectors have also uncovered that there is a human cost to congestion. The toll that congestion takes on our health, our well-being and our quality of life is significant. It's time that we get serious about funding the regional transportation system our region needs so urgently.

We have a plan in place. It's a \$50-billion plan proposed by the Big Move that has been approved by the provincial government as well as the heads of municipal councils, and it will create a seamless, multimodal, fully connected transportation system across the GTHA. We're glad that the province has already committed a significant amount to this plan, but we have so much more that we need to raise. So we are asking for all levels of government to commit to find the money to pay for a better system.

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Once Metrolinx submits its investment strategy to the province and the heads of our regions' towns and cities, we ask that you join CivicAction, civic leaders and

residents of the region in agreeing that we must solve the congestion problem. We must find ways to raise the money that is dedicated to building the system that we need and that there is no time to waste.

Based on what we've heard from our leaders and residents of the region, we are ready to see governments take action to raise the money, provided these new sources of revenue must meet certain principles. We will all benefit from the implementation of the Big Move and we must all be ready to contribute to making it happen. The funds need to be dedicated to transportation investments. They need to be efficient, transparent and accountable. They need to be regional, fair and sustainable.

Another key principle supported by CivicAction is ensuring that the implementation of new ways to collect revenue to fund transit does not adversely impact our most vulnerable citizens. Proper planning for rebates or some sort of accommodation for those least able to pay must be considered.

So in the weeks to come, CivicAction will be launching the next phase of its transportation campaign. We will be inviting civic leaders and elected representatives of the region to join together and show their support for greater investments and a commitment to take action to do so.

We hope we can count on you for your support then. The need to act has never been so clear and the cost of inaction has never been so high, so let's get moving.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. We'll go to questions; the opposition.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I don't have any questions.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): No questions?

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Do you, Rob?

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Thanks for coming here this afternoon; it's greatly appreciated. A lot of what you've presented to committee today, we've heard: the \$6 billion it costs annually, and also the potential of that increasing to about \$15 billion. Of course, population is a huge factor as well.

Something that my esteemed colleague from Durham alluded to—and the last speaker—I think is also going to be a huge issue moving forward, and obviously transit is paramount: As technology improves, the types of transit that we bring on board, as well as the ability to work at home, will have a huge impact on transportation and how that's looked at as well.

Have you, from that aspect, looked at any statistics or trends—movements—that would indicate how that will also be affected?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Definitely. In fact, CivicAction—our emerging leaders network conducted their own study. They convened 200 rising leaders, and that was a topic that came up. In fact, IBM was one of the key sponsors of that initiative that looked at some of those enhancements that could be made using technology, also advocating for more flexible work hours—basically addressing the load that's on peak hours and giving individuals choices in terms of when to travel.

The issue that we face in this region is that we have one of the worst commute times of any North American city, at 82 minutes. If we do nothing and our population continues to grow from six million to nine million people—we don't have the capacity today to move people efficiently, let alone for the future. So we do need to build out this additional capacity, and that's what our campaign is targeting. That being said, certainly, let's adopt some of the new technology and be as efficient as possible, as well as we'll welcome the flexibility of flex hours.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: The other issue I'd like to address—and maybe you've also done some studies as well, talking to the business communities etc.—is the capital monies that have been raised and that will be used to implement the new transit systems that need to come on board. It's just that capital isn't always necessarily the major hurdle or barrier that we face; it's the operational side of transit that becomes sometimes quite burdensome to taxpayers. How are we going to address that per se?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Certainly the \$50 billion that needs to be raised through the Big Move is addressing the capital needs. It's a \$2-billion cash flow requirement over 25 years. That does not take into consideration all of the operating needs, although some of it is taken into account in terms of end-of-life as well as replacement costs, but certainly on the operating side that needs to be addressed as well. My understanding is that 25% of the monies raised will go to local priorities, which could also be utilized for some of those operating needs.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Do we have any sort of numbers or figures that attach to the operational side of things?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I haven't seen those and I'm not sure if Metrolinx has those.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you. The third party.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Mitzie. I wanted to ask Metrolinx this question but I just didn't have enough time to get into it. I know that they're saying the cost will be \$50 billion for capital and \$20 billion for operating. That's a huge amount of money that we all have to start thinking about. I suspect, and we really haven't had this discussion with other people, this is a projection of what we think the costs will be. My suspicion is that they will be much higher as they unfold over a much longer period of time than people imagine, and as things progress, the costs will probably increase. And who knows by how much? We really don't yet have a sense of what this will cost down the line, but it's going to be incredibly expensive.

What I wanted to do is to thank you—as I did the board of trade—CivicAction, for your engagement with the public. It will be a challenge for us all, and soon all three parties will have to reveal what they're going to do and which sources of funding they will opt for that are reasonable and fair to everyone. But it will happen soon. Thank you for doing the work.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): To the government side. Ms. Cansfield.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Hi, Mitzie. How are you?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Hello.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: So \$6 billion: I always wonder who came up with that, and I think it's the board of trade that really did. I always wonder how they came up with that, so I guess I'd better ask the board of trade next time I see them, because it's the one that everybody keeps using.

The interesting part in the whole issue around congestion is that the assumption continues to be that everybody is going to travel from outside Toronto to inside Toronto for the rest of their lives, and that's not quite the case. Building infrastructure means you have to look at it from a really fairly large perspective. It's not just a downtown Toronto challenge, because it's no question it's a challenge.

I guess my question through to you is that, as you look at that and that broader—the idea, if you want to create, as we have—I think Seaton is a good example, employment lands and residential lands and then you've got to move potentially 40,000 or 50,000 people, so transportation infrastructure becomes critical. There are lots of Seatons, Shelburnes and other areas; you get into Milton, Vaughan. They all can be industrial, commercial and residential, just the same as downtown Toronto. So it's really the connection of all of those.

I guess I'm just trying to say that it's not a downtown Toronto problem, and sometimes we tend to focus on just the whole world is downtown Toronto and it's really not. It's the movement of goods and services and people, back and forth, and people can live in downtown Toronto and work in Vaughan, for example.

In your discussions that you have with the civic leaders that talk about this, do they look at multimodal transportation? Or is it just strictly transit?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: It's definitely multimodal. You're absolutely right that people are choosing to live and work and have reasons to get around right across the region. There's a lot of traffic happening north and south as people get to employment areas, as well as east and west, or really, perhaps living in one area and studying in another. There are over two and a half million trips that cross municipal boundaries on a day-to-day basis, and really, congestion is a problem in our region, whether you're in the outer rings or you're in the core. These investments are meant to address that.

Over 1,200 kilometres of new rapid transit will be built based on the Metrolinx Big Move plan. That plan was put together with consideration for the provincial government's growth plan and the Places to Grow strategy that's in place right now. So it is taking into consideration the intensification and the density that we need along transit corridors, but certainly it's not just all about the core, although the core itself is already at capacity.

1730

I recently had an opportunity with students from Centennial College to participate in the Big Race. They

basically dropped me in an area and gave me instructions on how to get downtown. It was an incredible experience. I talked to people from all across this region, people who lived in Brampton and were working downtown every day, riding our transit system. Really, and I think it speaks to the other member's comments, the burden is not just an economic burden, but it's a human cost as well, with people not having time for family and for things that really improve our quality of life because they're stuck commuting. There was one woman I spoke to; she commuted two and a half hours each day to get to and from work. That's really the equivalent of a part-time job just trying to get around to get to work.

It's really an issue that needs to be solved. It's simply unproductive. That \$6 billion was put together by the board of trade, and it's probably a conservative estimate. The cost is really probably far greater. It's one that we know is growing each and every year.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Kevin wants to ask a question, but just on that, if you live in Brampton and you work downtown, it's going to take you, even with no traffic, an hour and a half to commute to downtown Toronto, even if there's nothing. It raises a whole other issue around affordability and having jobs or industry or whatever in another part—the satellites, whatever. That should be also part of a broader discussion that's taking place.

You don't have to answer, because Kevin wants to ask you a question.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you for the presentation.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): You have 10 seconds.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Ten seconds?

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ten seconds. I told you you only had a minute.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It was really nice to meet you. Say hi to John for us.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I apologize.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you for being here.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Now the committee will move to the next two items, which are the motions that were moved earlier today. Is somebody going to take carriage of Mr. Colle's?

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Yes, I can.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mrs. Cansfield, I require you to read the motion.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Certainly. I move that the subcommittee meet at the call of the Chair to have further discussions on how to proceed with a review of the Aggregate Resources Act.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Any discussion? Mr. Marchese?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No, but I'm very, very supportive of the motion because it completes the work that we had started last year, and we need to finish it off.

Having the subcommittee talk about the work that should follow is important.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further comments?

Mr. John O'Toole: As a standing person on this committee, I agree and had some participation in that as well. It's good to have Donna Cansfield here, who was the minister, very much engaged in that process. It's a lot of work, and it's an important subject.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Okay, shall I take the vote? All in favour? Carried.

Now the motion by Ms. Campbell, if I could get you to read it into the record.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I move:

(1) That the Standing Committee on General Government meet during normal meeting hours for the purpose of holding public hearings pursuant to standing order 111(a) to initiate a fair and balanced study into a range of auto insurance industry practices and trends on Monday, April 15, 2013, and Wednesday, April 17, 2013, in Toronto.

(2) That each organization be allowed 10 minutes for their presentation followed by 10 minutes for questions by each party for a total of 40 minutes per witness.

(3) That witnesses appear on a first-come, first-served basis.

(4) That the Clerk of the Committee invite Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) to present for 10 minutes followed by up to 30 minutes of questioning by each party.

(5) That the committee Clerk post information regarding public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly website and CNW newswire service by noon, Thursday, April 11, 2013.

(6) That interested parties who wish to be considered to make an oral presentation contact the committee Clerk by 12 o'clock noon on Friday, April 12, 2013.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Everybody understands the motion? Any comments?

Mr. John O'Toole: Yes. The mover of the motion may want to make it, but I was just suggesting a friendly amendment. I know that FSCO is the regulator, but I think there needs to be a bit more discussion, broader, on your behalf really, with the IBC and the insurance brokers themselves. FSCO has the position of rates, and one of the recommendations is to file and use rates. When I was in FSCO, that's one of the things they talked about: file and use rates. There are other suggestions on the auto insurance file; I think it's an important file.

I'll leave it at that. It's a friendly amendment; if you don't, then you can do what you wish.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I think I would like to leave it like this, John; obviously, all the other people will be coming, I'm sure.

Mr. John O'Toole: Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Did you move an amendment?

Mr. John O'Toole: No, it was just a friendly discussion.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Okay.

Further discussion, Ms. Cansfield.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you. I just wanted to, on number 3: The witnesses appear on a first-come, first-served basis. I would like to think that there's fair representation in terms of the witnesses that come forward. I don't know how we've done this in the past, but I would like to think that we might submit names as well, as you might choose to submit names and you might choose to submit names. If it's just a list of people who come in automatically, we may not have a balanced approach. I'd take some conversation from this.

The Clerk Pro Tem (Mr. Trevor Day): With this particular type of turnaround, any time we have a name or a list set up, we would need a deadline and time to get the list to you as to who requested to appear, you'd have to get them back to us, we'd have to schedule these people—with it being starting actual hearings a week from today, the first-come, first-served is one of the quickest ways to turn around. Other than that, we'd have to post the information, I'd say, by tomorrow morning. A deadline would have to be set somewhere in the neighbourhood of, perhaps, Thursday afternoon to hear back—later Thursday—and then try to schedule everybody for the Monday.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Can I just recommend to her that if you know people that you want to come, then let them know that this motion has been moved and ask them to call early.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Certainly, that's what I will do. I would think everyone would like to have the opportunity to have reasonable representation in terms of their perspective on this.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes, so I urge you to do that.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I was just more concerned, because I just got this, that there's a timing issue.

The Clerk Pro Tem (Mr. Trevor Day): For the committee's information, at the start of this meeting there were currently two requests to appear. I don't know who they are, but that's who we had.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: So they knew it before we had an opportunity?

The Clerk Pro Tem (Mr. Trevor Day): We take requests to appear before—

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: That was my point, gentlemen.

The Clerk Pro Tem (Mr. Trevor Day): We take requests to appear as soon as the issue is raised.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Which insurance company is it?

The Clerk Pro Tem (Mr. Trevor Day): I don't know who they are. I'm just saying.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Further discussion? Anybody else? No?

Shall I take the vote? All in favour? Carried.

That's all the business. The committee is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1738.

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Clerk pro tem / Greffier par intérim

Mr. Trevor Day

Staff / Personnel

Mr. Jerry Richmond, research officer,
Legislative Research Service

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