
REGIONAL EXPRESS RAIL UPDATE

York Region Committee of the Whole

September 10, 2015 | Leslie Woo, Chief Planning Officer

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Outline

1. Background and Context
2. Regional Express Rail (RER) Background
3. RER in the Regional Planning Context
4. Responses to issues raised by York Region
 - Train whistle-blowing
 - Grade separation planning process
 - Station access planning
 - New stations analysis
 - Fare integration
 - Next Wave planning
5. Engagement
6. Questions and Discussion



Context

- Regional Express Rail (RER) is part of a larger comprehensive regional network of rapid transit corridors
- Over the past year, ongoing meetings between Metrolinx and York Region staff have facilitated the development of the RER service concept and infrastructure plan and Metrolinx is committed to continuous engagement throughout the process of RER planning and implementation
- Metrolinx staff provided a Technical Briefing to York Region staff in May 2015
- York Region staff drafted a response affirming the RER program and posing a number of questions for further engagement
- This presentation provides background on the RER service and infrastructure program and addresses key issues raised in the York Region response document

Current GO Rail Network

PEAK



OFF - PEAK



450-km +
rail network



63 stations spread
throughout the GTHA



all-day, two-way service
on the Lakeshore East
and West lines



Connections with
17 local transit agencies



Over 90% on-time
performance rate



48 years
of experience

GO RER will reduce travel times and give people more ways to get where they want to go with:

Trains up to every 15 minutes



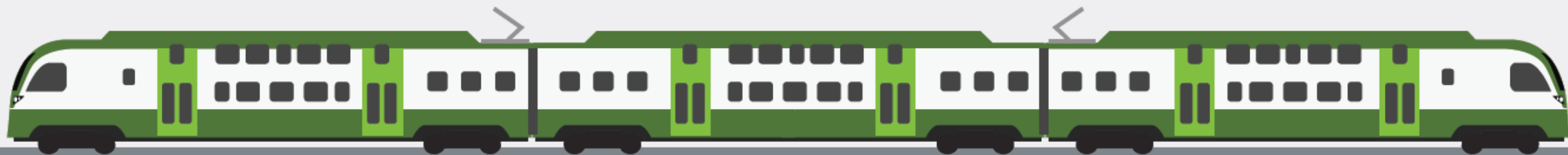
Service in both directions



More all-day service



Faster electric trains



More than

50

large cities across the world use
Regional Express Rail systems.

Whether it's the Réseau Express Régional in Paris, the Overground in London, or NSW TrainLink in Sydney, each RER system has these basic traits:



Frequent
all-day
service



Uses
electric
trains



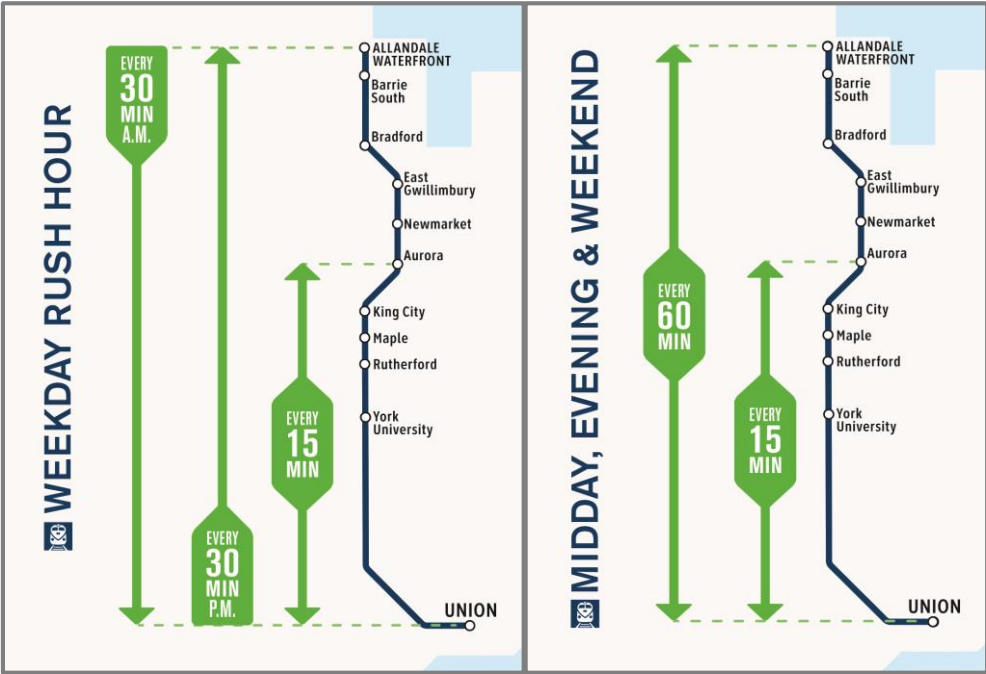
Runs on
surface
rail lines



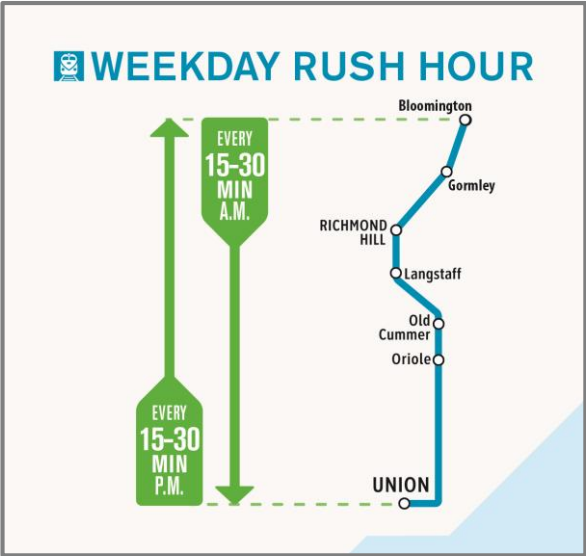
Good
connections
with local transit

RER Service in York Region

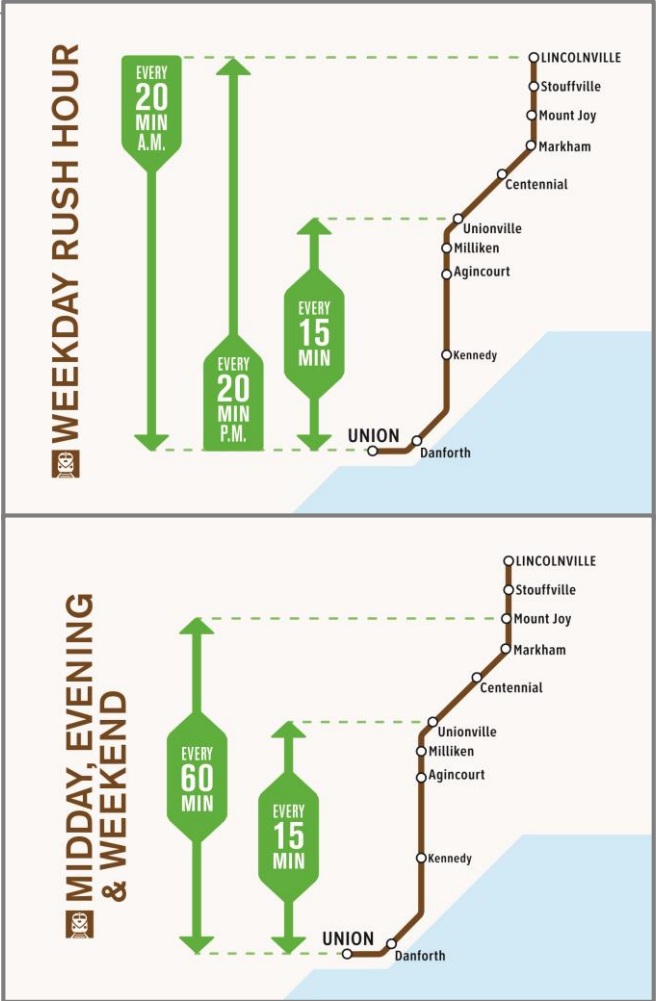
Barrie



Richmond Hill



Stouffville



Infrastructure Needs

This level of service doesn't come easy. Metrolinx is undertaking one of the largest infrastructure projects in North America to support better, more reliable service.



New Track

150 kilometres of new dedicated GO track will allow for more uninterrupted service.



New Trains

New electric trains will travel faster for longer and reduce travel times.



New Bridges and Tunnels

Bridges and tunnels that eliminate intersections with rail and road traffic will provide more reliable GO train service.



New Renovations

New and improved stations will make your journey more comfortable, from start to finish.

Train Whistle-Blowing Requirements

- The 8 step procedure for eliminating the requirement to whistle is set out by Transport Canada under the Railway Safety Act
- Key steps include the following requirements:
 - Public notice by the municipality that it intends to pass a resolution that it agrees whistles should not be used
 - Assessment by the municipality and railway whether the crossing meets the Transport Canada Standards
 - If the standards are met, the municipality may pass a resolution prohibiting whistling
 - The railway notifies Transport Canada and implements whistle cessation within 30 days
 - The municipality and railway are responsible for monitoring and ensuring that the crossing continues to meet the Standards
- Metrolinx will work with the municipality, and will support whistle cessation provided the Standards are met

Planning for Grade Separations

- Metrolinx has over 170 public road/rail at-grade crossings across all corridors, with over 60 within York Region
- The preference is to eliminate as many at-grade crossings as possible to enhance connectivity, transportation system efficiency and also address potential safety concerns
- Metrolinx is evaluating all crossings to recommend potential grade separation locations, and will work with Region of York and area municipalities to further assess these locations based on common considerations
- These discussions are expected to further inform decisions on the overall RER program

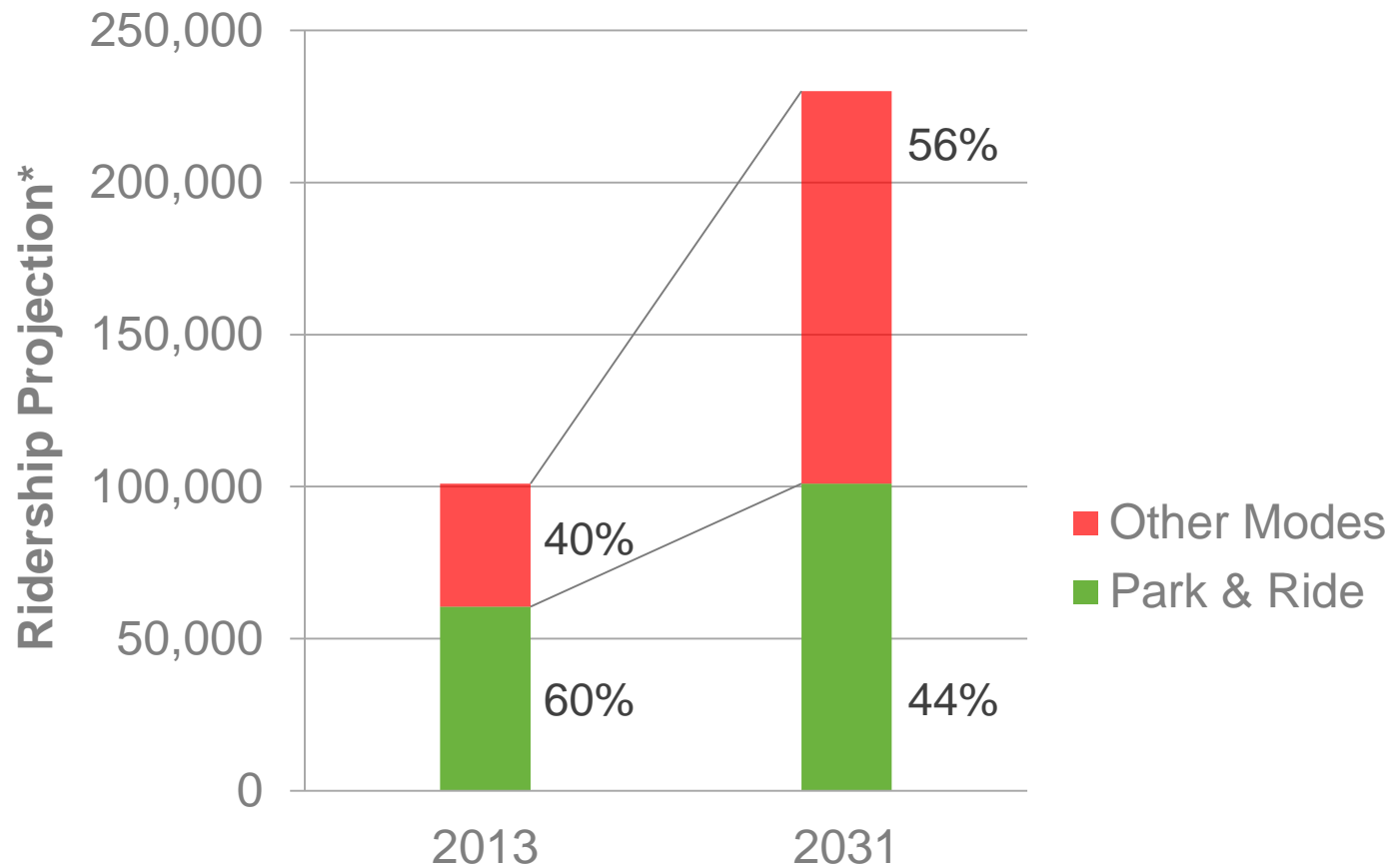
Level Crossings within York Region



Grade Separations: Next Steps

- Continue with an Environmental Assessment and Design project for the Stouffville corridor
- Determine a strategy for the Barrie and Richmond Hill corridors
- Continue to engage stakeholders on grade separation considerations

Station Access is critical to RER's ridership potential



Currently:

- 60 % of GO rail customers drive and park
- Most GO rail parking lots are at or near capacity
- Share of other modes, led by pick-up/drop-off and local transit, is growing
- **Successful implementation of RER will require increases to parking coupled with faster growth in use of other models**

**2013 ridership based on 2013 GO Rail Passenger Survey & 2031 ridership based on 2015 RER Initial Business Case*

Station Access: Getting to and from GO services

- The “first mile” and “last mile” are crucial to RER’s success
- More frequent train trips, attracting greater numbers of passengers, will necessitate changes to the mix of modes at GO stations



Active Transportation

- Attractive and safe walking and cycling routes
- Bicycle parking
- Bike Share services



Local Transit

- Building on existing relationships with municipal service providers
- Opportunities to improve seamlessness and convenience (eg scheduling, routing, wayfinding)



Drop-offs/Pick-ups

- Ensuring convenient access for “kiss and ride” users, taxis etc.
- New opportunities for dynamically-routed shuttles



Park and Ride

- Parking supply growing, but capital intensive and cannot expand indefinitely
- Optimization initiatives (eg reserved carpool parking)

We are updating the GO Rail Station Access Plan to:

- Assess impacts of RER on Station Access
- Fill research gaps and supplement analyses in all access modes:
 - Alternative parking supply and management
 - Passenger pick-up/drop-off & demand response shuttles
 - Local transit & GO bus services
 - Active transportation
- Determine station access investment needs to support RER
- Refine implementation strategy to achieve plan targets

Update will not reopen the 2013 Plan's Policy Statement which emphasizes reducing dependency on single-occupancy vehicles that drive and park at stations.

Stations and the GO network

- Stations are gateways to the region, part of a network linking residents to jobs, family and play
- New stations are not funded (beyond those already planned)
- Metrolinx is already actively planning for and constructing new stations throughout the network including Gormley and Bloomington in York Region
- These stations will enhance existing service, in anticipation of RER

Markham Station



New Station Analysis

Stage 1. Identifying an initial list

120+ sites identified using key site and network considerations

Stage 2. Focusing analysis

Analyzed site factors, service considerations and historical requests, to scope list to 50+ sites

Stage 3. Evaluating

Analyzed strategic, economic, technical/operational and cost/revenue considerations of 50+ sites

Stage 4. Municipal and Public Engagement

Feedback and review of 50+ sites

Stage 5. Moving to Shortlist

Scope sites for further analysis

Stage 6. Further Analysis

Following public engagement, more detailed business case analysis will begin on shortlisted sites

New Stations Next Steps

Stage 4. Municipal and Public Engagement

Sept 14 Meeting with York Region:

- Background on RER and stations
- Gather local knowledge on specific sites

(Fall 2015) Public meetings:

- Discussion on methodology, criteria and process, identified locations and clusters

Stage 5. Moving to Shortlist

(Winter 2015/16)

- Based on public engagement and continuing analysis

Stage 6. Further Analysis

(Winter 2015/16)

- Undertake further study including business case assessment on short list

Recommend new stations for consideration

(Spring 2016)

- Based on results of further analysis

GTHA Fare Integration - Vision

The evaluation of options is based on the draft long-term vision and goals for the GTHA fare integration strategy, developed with stakeholder input, and focusing on the customer perspective to regional transit travel.

Vision

- The *GTHA Regional Fare Integration Strategy* will increase customer mobility and transit ridership while maintaining the financial sustainability of GTHA's transit services.
- This strategy will remove barriers and enable transit to be perceived and experienced as one network composed of multiple systems/service providers.

Deliverables Toward GTHA Fare Integration

Intensive work with active municipal transit agency involvement has short-listed options for in-depth analysis to develop a recommended Fare Structure

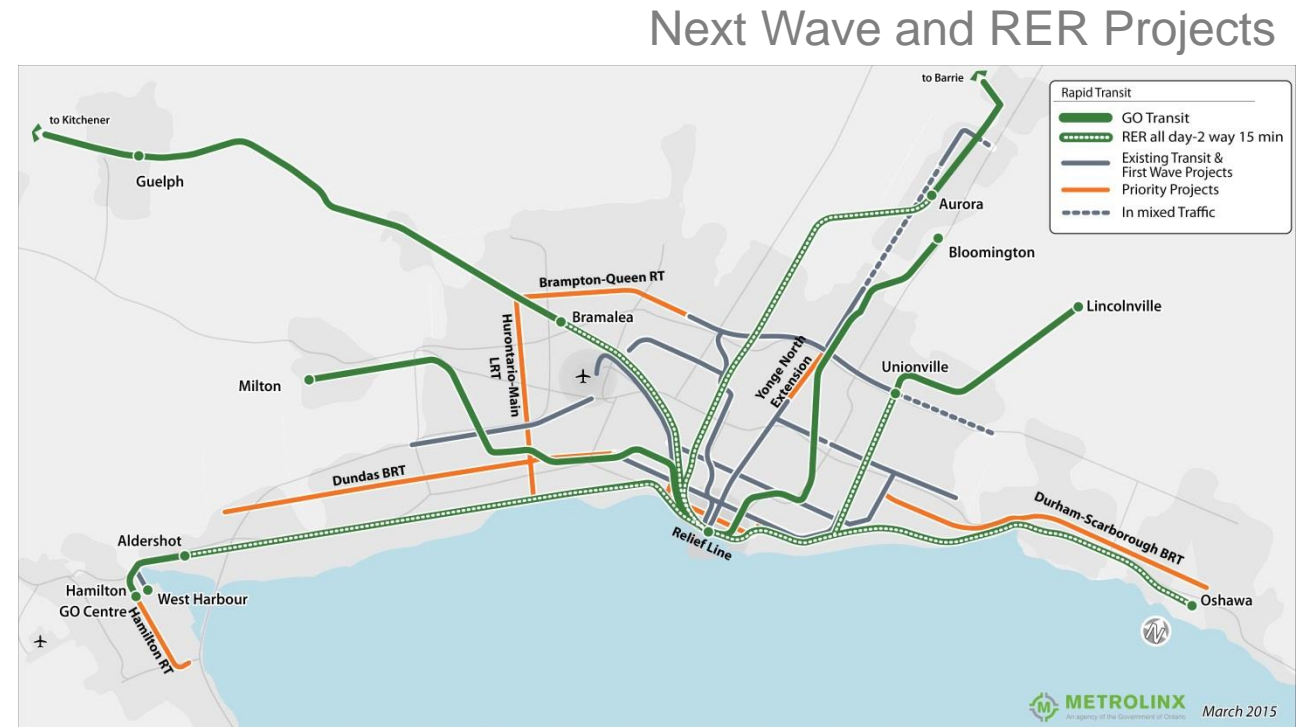


GTHA Fare Integration: Next Steps

- Presentation of preliminary analysis to the Metrolinx September Board of Directors
- Ongoing engagement with the Technical Advisory Committee, including York Region Transit (YRT)

Next Wave Project Planning

- Meeting the growing transportation needs of the region requires a pipeline of projects ready to be delivered and operated as funding becomes available
- Project planning and design work will continue for Next Wave projects
- Municipal partnership is critical to project success and strategies for engagement will be tailored to the context of each individual project



The Next Wave is Metrolinx's bundle of priority projects, including the Yonge North Subway Extension to York Region

Engagement Plan

Engagement with municipalities and local communities is an essential part of the GO RER program.

- **Municipal Briefings** – This fall Metrolinx is scheduling a tour of briefings for regional municipalities to provide a tailored overview and update on GO RER planning and projects. **September - October**
- **Stakeholder Forum and Corridor Committees** – next series of corridor committees will take place in **November** following the federal election. The agenda for these meetings will include a combination of items that were requested by specific tables and updates on key elements of the RER program.
- **Public engagement** - early public engagement and consultations are beginning this fall/winter, including system-wide consultations on electrification.
- **Online engagement hub, this fall** Metrolinx will be launching a new social media hub that will allow residents to receive information about projects as well participate in live forums, review questions asked by others in the community and get up-to-date information on projects on their smartphones.
- **RER Communicators Table** – Metrolinx communications will be inviting municipal colleagues to participate in a regular table discussion where briefings on key elements of the RER program and communication initiatives will be shared.

Questions and Discussion