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Submission From:

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To: City of Toronto Executive Council

Re: Moving Forward: Improving Public Transit and Relieving Traffic Congestion through a Regional Funding Strategy

Dear Councillors,

We wish to submit to the Executive Committee for distribution at its meeting on June 12 the following comment on the item named Moving Forward: Improving Public Transit and Relieving Traffic Congestion through a Regional Funding Strategy. Unfortunately, we cannot depute in person due to previous out-of-province meetings. We do hope that the committee will consider our written submission with equal weight.

Overview

Metrolinx's regional transportation plan will improve quality of life for residents, reduce congestion, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, as well as increase the affordability of living in the region. In Pembina's analysis of Ontario's transportation sector in [Driving Down Carbon](#) and [Bridging the Gulf](#), we have found that completing Metrolinx's regional transportation plan is our biggest opportunity to reduce personal transportation emissions and reduce our dependence on imported oil. Councillor Matlow's motion to bring together municipalities across the GTA to explore how to fund Metrolinx's regional transportation plan (RTP) is an important step in delivering rapid transit and the many associated benefits to communities across the GTA.

Bringing municipalities across the GTA and Metrolinx together are critical for a many reasons:

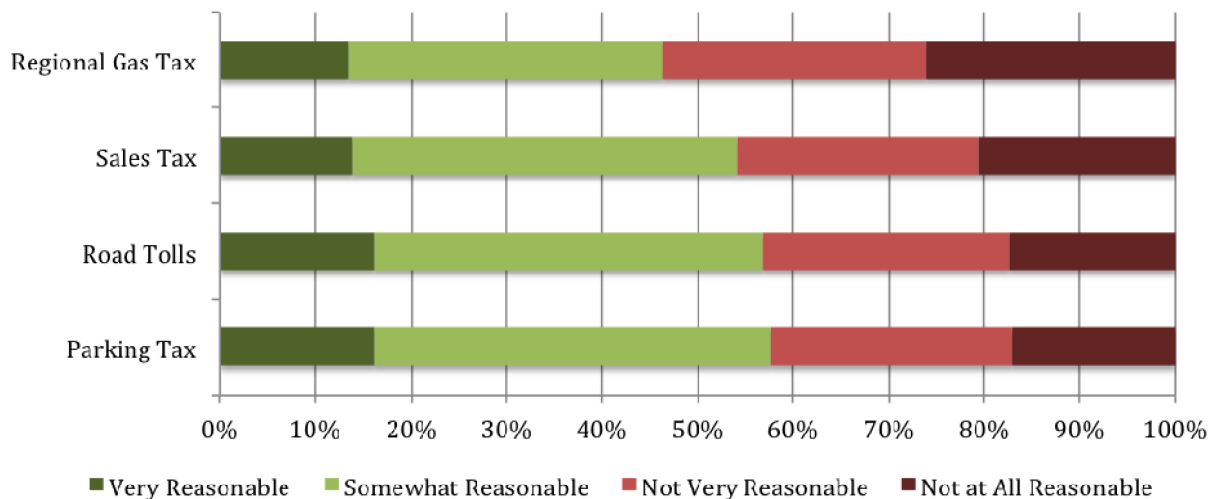
- Engaging municipalities can help identify key transit and transit funding priorities.
- Bringing together municipalities across the GTA to ensure Metrolinx's RTP is implemented in way that benefits everyone.
- Bringing all municipalities and parties together to help identify opportunities and to allay concerns around the use of revenue tools to fund transit.

Support for Revenue Tools

Earlier this year we worked with Environics to survey drivers in the GTA whose minimum commute time was 30 minutes one-way. The results of this survey are presented in detail in our report: [Drivers Choice: Options to manage gridlock and fund rapid transit in the region](#). The survey results showed that up to 58% of GTA drivers are at least moderately warm to tolls taxes and fees, and the level of support varied little between the type of fee or tax (see figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Acceptability of pricing options

How reasonable are these policies to raise funds for transit expansion and improving road and highway travel:



Support for these policies is significantly higher when they are fair, transparent and dedicated to building rapid transit in the region, meaning this must be a priority moving forwards.

- 70% of drivers surveyed were more willing to pay a user fee on a highway or road if the funds were used to build new rapid transit in the GTA.
- 69% were more willing to pay a user fee on a highway or road if the fee was dedicated to building new rapid transit that connected their community with a broader rapid transit system in the GTA.
- 69% would find a road toll more acceptable if the funds were fully dedicated to building a rapid transit line close to the tolled route.
- Of those who found tolls unreasonable, almost half (46%) thought them to be more acceptable if they were only on routes where rapid transit alternatives exist.

Given this level of support among drivers for these fees or taxes, let alone support from users of the transit system, it is time to start exploring these options in earnest and how they can help move our regional transportation plan. Bringing together municipalities and Metrolinx is an important step in

properly exploring these options and developing a funding plan to deliver Metrolinx's regional transportation plan and the associated benefits in a way that is agreeable and advantageous to communities across the GTA.

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