



# Councillor Josh Matlow

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Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
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Dear Chair and Committee Members,

## **Re: Item AU11.3 Request for SmartTrack Investigation**

I am writing regarding item AU11.3 being considered at the February 12th meeting of the Audit Committee.

I appreciate the recommendations and advice provided by the Auditor General, but I believe it is imperative that an audit of SmartTrack be conducted this year. This audit is necessary to ensure accountability for how City funds are being spent and to prevent the continuation of the longstanding pattern of mismanagement of Metrolinx projects.

In the summary of her recommendations, the Auditor General notes that an audit of SmartTrack could examine “whether any cost escalations over the past few years could have potentially been prevented through better planning and efficiencies by Metrolinx” as well as “how SmartTrack program funding is used, and potentially how Metrolinx manages procurements and contracts”. I believe these questions are critical and warrant investigation.

I respectfully disagree with the Auditor General’s assessment that she does not have the “authority or mandate” to conduct this audit. While her authority may not extend to compelling information from Metrolinx, I am not aware of any restriction that would prevent her from requesting information, at least on a confidential basis, nor from drawing reasonable adverse inferences where Metrolinx declines to cooperate.

With respect to mandate, the Auditor General is empowered to investigate potential fraud, waste, and wrongdoing involving City resources. Unfortunately, in my view there is ample evidence to suggest that the City’s ongoing partnership with Metrolinx exposes Toronto to the risk of all three. Failing to pursue all available avenues to obtain answers before committing further public funds could be seen by Toronto’s residents as a dereliction of our duty.

Regarding the second recommendation that the Confidential Attachment to this report remain entirely confidential, I believe the public should be afforded the greatest possible transparency. Despite the substantial investment from Toronto’s taxpayers, SmartTrack was not delivered with the number of stations or within the timeframe that was initially promised, so residents’ skepticism of what they are told without proof is well earned.

While confidentiality must be respected where information has been provided in confidence, our primary responsibility is to the public. Every effort should be made to negotiate the release of additional information as it becomes available. This information can help residents assess future claims or commitments made by Metrolinx and contribute to rebuilding public trust.

We cannot throw our hands up and say that this is not our responsibility and that there is nothing we can do. Toronto has faced a prolonged budget crisis, and as we work to dig our way out of it, we must be accountable for every public dollar spent.

I ask that the Committee return recommendations to Council to add an audit of SmartTrack to the Auditor Generals' work plan this year, and that staff work with Metrolinx to determine what information from the Confidential Attachment can reasonably be disclosed to the public.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,



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